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The Week

IN THE undeclared war between Japan and China the campaigns about Shanghai and the Peiping region continued without decisive result, while thousands of non-combatants were killed and injured, including some who were not citizens of the belligerent powers. Two Japanese military planes attacked a motor car carrying the British Ambassador and severely wounded him. This serious incident was used by the British Foreign Office as the occasion for a protest against Japan's war on civilians that may have long diplomatic reverberations. Other misfortunes were more clearly accidental: many people, including two New York Times correspondents, were wounded by a great airplane bomb dropped from an unknown source in the shopping district of Shanghai; Chinese war planes bombed the "President Hoover" under the impression that she was a Japanese transport. . . . Our government, while protesting against such incidents, continued to fail to apply the Neutrality Act, and gave signs of intending to pursue a common policy with Great Britain. . . . A pact of non-aggression between China and the Soviet Union was announced. . . . In Spain, the Rebels captured Santander, and proceeded to try to wipe out the last holdings of the government on the northern coast. The Loyalists attacked Saragossa in force, intending apparently to pinch off the long Rebel salient about Teruel, which threatened to cut communications between Madrid and Valencia from the eastward side. . . . No more was heard of the non-intervention pact, or of its abrogation either. Great Britain apparently is still content to deny aid to the Spanish government while allowing Italy and Germany to do as they like in helping Franco.

EVENTS in the United States seemed to slacken their pace with the adjournment of Congress. . . . Secretary Farley said that the administration would not seek to punish its Democratic opponents in Congress, but that many of them might have trouble with their constituents. The opponents tried to keep alive the political asset which they hoped to derive through being victimized by Farley. . . . In New York City the Communist Party endorsed Mayor LaGuardia for reëlection, thus causing a good deal of embarrassment to his supporters in the Republican primary. Mr. LaGuardia was forced to disavow belief in Communist principles. Previously Senator Copeland had tried to split LaGuardia's labor support by denouncing the CIO and praising the A.F. of L., but the state convention of the A.F. of L. nevertheless endorsed the Mayor. . . . Andrew W. Mellon died, leaving a large fortune to a charitable foundation. His family had previously been provided for. It was uncertain whether estate taxes would apply. . . . President Roosevelt signed the bill providing for a census of the unemployed, which will probably amount to nothing. . . . The automobile workers met in convention, settled their internal dispute for the time being, and voted a war chest of $400,000 to unionize the Ford plants. . . . The CIO swept the election among rubber workers in Goodyear and Goodrich.

ANDREW W. MELLON, dead at eighty-two, carried a perfectly consistent career to a somewhat anti-climactic end. It was his reasoned philosophy that a man should be allowed to accumulate as much wealth as he possibly could, with a minimum of supervision from government or any other source

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as to methods used in the accumulation. In his historic role as Secretary of the Treasury during the Harding-Coolidge boom, Mr. Mellon consciously followed a policy of easing taxes on the very rich in order to enable them to become still richer. Of the responsibility for failure to curb the boom whose eventual collapse plunged this country into the worst depression since it was founded, a major share must go to Mr. Mellon. He survived the disaster, survived President Hoover's gently shoving him aside to be Ambassador to Great Britain, survived the income-tax investigation which the New Deal brought in its train and died with his fortune intact and his goal of enormous personal wealth completely achieved. From a career so consistent and so completely realized we had a right to expect a shining example of the good that results from the system advocated by Mr. Mellon. What the country actually gets is a vaguely charitable foundation, closely controlled within the family and provided with a self-perpetuating board of trustees, whose objectives are not clearly defined. On this basis of the results of his policies on his competitors and his countrymen during his lifetime and the residue at his death, society must record the thesis presented by Andrew W. Mellon, individualist and multimillionaire, as not proven.

THE non-aggression pact between the Soviet Union and China, which has just been announced, is a hint to Japan of what she already knew well enough—that the USSR does not look with favor upon her war against China. But whether it means any more than that is an open question. Its published terms, unlike those of some other bilateral treaties of a similar kind, do not bind either party to help the other against an aggressor, but simply bind both not to help the aggressor. Nobody supposed the Soviet Union was going to turn to and help Japan conquer China. The real question remains—how much help the Soviet Union can or will give to China in resisting Japan? Certainly she does not want to become involved in the war; to do so would be to invite attack on her western frontier. She can transport military supplies to China only with the greatest difficulty; and Japan's thrust into Mongolia is aimed to interrupt any such possible communication. Airplanes, of course, can fly across from Outer Mongolia. But even so, the Soviet government, in pursuit of its policy of attending primarily to its own affairs and preparing for defense, is likely to avoid too great prominence in the Chinese picture. As Mr. Edgar Snow has shown in his New Republic articles on Soviet China, Russia gave very little help to the Chinese Communists after Stalin's victory. This may forecast her action in this case.

IN THE threatened strike of the railroad men who operate the trains, we see the working of the special labor legislation that governs the railroad industry. This was drafted, after long experience, to give the railroad unions the utmost freedom in collective bargaining that is compatible with the utmost possible assurance against interruption of transportation. The unions met with the management and presented their demands for increased wages. The management refused; a deadlock ensued. The union officials, under authorization from their members, called a strike to start on Labor Day. But they did so with full knowledge that the law prescribes governmental intervention in such a case. The Mediation Board promptly stepped into the controversy to try to bring about a voluntary settlement. The Board has thirty days to produce an agreement. If it cannot do so, it publishes a report to inform the public of the situation. The unions can then strike if they wish to do so, but only after another thirty-day interval. Thus there is provided a cooling-off period, and no strike can occur until everybody has had a chance to be informed of the facts and issues. Another possible way out is provided. Both sides can accept arbitration; if they do, they are bound to abide by the arbitrator's decision. Obduracy in behalf of an indefensible cause is thus made unlikely. But the ultimate right to strike is not abrogated, if the employees, after due consideration, believe the sacrifices involved are the only way to serve their needs.

LOUD protests have arisen in Massachusetts over references to the Sacco and Vanzetti case in the WPA guidebook, "Massachusetts: A Guide to Its Places and People," published by Houghton, Mifflin. Governor Hurley has made unsuccessful efforts to halt the printing of the book and Massachusetts members of Congress have demanded that WPA officials in Washington censor the volume. On the face of things this is a rather bald attempt by a state to interfere in matters that are clearly within the federal sphere. Aside from questions of legality and propriety, however, just what does the complaint itself amount to? The sentence that seems to have aroused most opposition says of Sacco and Vanzetti: "It was widely believed that, although legal forms were observed, the determining factor in the case from start to finish was the affiliation of the two men with an unpopular minority group." By any standards of English rhetoric with which we are familiar, that seems to us a simple statement of objective fact. Undoubtedly such a belief *was* widely held. We go beyond the quoted sentence and say that not only was such a belief widely held, but it was completely justified by the facts in the case.

PROFESSIONAL politicians are a dreary breed, by and large, and one of their most discouraging attributes is their ability to reproduce themselves. These reflections are prompted by the national convention of the Young Democratic Clubs of America, which met in Indianapolis August 19 to 21. With their party threatened by the gravest kind of internal split, with some of the New Deal's most urgent and enlightened legislation either ignored or scuttled by a retreating Congress and with interna-

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tional affairs at a state of crisis, these earnest young statesmen of tomorrow, we are told by a correspondent who was on the grounds, were primarily concerned with wearing fancy hats, investigating the product of local barrooms and lobbying intensively for the honor of getting the convention city for 1939. A sweating resolutions committee pushed a set of rather good resolutions through an apathetic convention and the delegates departed for home, each one hoping that at least he had jockeyed himself into an improved position for obtaining party favors as they come along.

THE census of the unemployed, authorized by Congress in its closing hours, is the gloomiest farce imaginable. Those who are without jobs or are working part-time will be invited to go to some central registration point and give their names and detailed facts about themselves and their families. No penalties are provided for failure to register. We already have complete lists of those unemployed who have sought federal aid through the WPA, PWA, CCC, etc. All that the new census can do is to turn up the additional persons who are out of work but have never found it necessary to ask for relief. This foolish enterprise is the result of a tug-of-war between the progressives in Congress, who wanted a real census, and the administration, which, for political reasons, wanted no inquiry at all. The outcome is a waste of the taxpayers' money. Meanwhile, the arguments in favor of a real study of unemployment remain just as valid, and just as disregarded, as ever.

A CALLER wandered into our office last week who seemed to have an Important Suggestion. Said he: "The trouble with wars nowadays is that they are fought at inconvenient places. Not only do they occur in the midst of masses of civilians, who get hurt, but often they involve place-names that no one can spell or pronounce. The cure for all this is to have a special area prepared where all future wars can be held. Let's pick out some place like Northern Australia, now almost uninhabited, and build two sets of opposing trenches. Then when a couple of countries get angry with each other, they can send their armies to this war zone to fight. Place-names would be short and simple, for the benefit of headline writers; I suggest Poo, Boo, Moo and Coo. Topographical maps would be prepared in advance and you wouldn't need a fresh set for each war. The correspondents would have comfortable, permanent buildings assigned to them. One great advantage would be that you couldn't have two wars going on simultaneously: they would be booked in advance, to last a definite number of weeks and end in time to permit the next war to start when scheduled. You might even get a couple of professional armies who would fight all wars for a fixed fee, merely changing their flags at the proper time. Then, as to war atrocities—" But at this point we were forced to excuse ourselves and go to work.

The President Heads Toward War

WHEN FIGHTING broke out in China, The New Republic urged that as soon as it became clear that large-scale hostilities between Japan and the central Chinese government were under way, President Roosevelt ought to declare that a state of war existed and thus automatically bring into play the new Neutrality Act. Otherwise embarrassing incidents were bound to occur, commercial interests profiting from war trade would become vocal and the same kind of slow and subtle drift would start which eventually led us to fight against the Central Powers in 1917.

War in China has now been going on for sevearl weeks, and both Japan and China are obviously enlisted for its duration. Serious incidents have occurred, and more are certain to come. Commercial interests are busy warning against the application of the law. Yet the President and Secretary Hull blandly continue to act as if they had a completely free hand to pursue whatever course they pleased, as if Congress had not in advance prescribed their policy in just such a situation as this. Not to recognize that a state of war exists in China, and not to apply the measures that the law prescribes, seems to us a defiance of the legislative branch, a denial of democracy. More than that, the course actually adopted appears unwise in the extreme, one that is bound to end either in ignominy or in the sending of American ships or doughboys to fight the Japanese. Let us see why this is so.

The British note protesting against the shooting of the British Ambassador to China from a Japanese plane lays a groundwork that is in perfect harmony with what Secretary Hull has been saying, and with the line that our Department of State seems to be pursuing. The incident in itself was one that naturally would arouse passions in both nations. The British might have regarded it, however, as an isolated though unfortunate insult to their honor and dignity, amends for which would be made by proper apologies, indemnities and punishments. Instead they chose to treat it as a case typical of something more serious. The action of the Japanese is illegal under international law. It threatens the lives of civilians who have no part in the conflict. The British demand that Japan cease activities which may cause similar injury in the future. Though the note did not say so, the British as well as our State Department are giving a good deal of attention to the fact that the Japanese are also destroying valuable property owned in the protesting nations. Thus the general principle is being established that Japan is a willful violator of the law, an international outlaw. Against this background will be thrown all future annoyances and injuries. We are building up claims against which a demand for payment may at any time be presented.

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Japan has declared a blockade of Chinese ports, ostensibly applicable against Chinese shipping only. Yet there is a good deal of vagueness as to what the Japanese will do with cargoes of arms, ammunition or implements of war going to the Chinese in foreign ships. At the very least, such ships are likely to be stopped and searched, and their cargoes confiscated—perhaps with payment to the shippers, and perhaps not. American ships are now on the high seas, carrying war planes to China. It is absurd to think that the Japanese military authorities, in view of their determination to win a prompt and sweeping victory, will allow such shipments to reach their enemies for any length of time or in large quantities, if they can prevent it. The Neutrality Act was devised especially to avoid controversies such as are likely to arise over this kind of trade. Yet our government permits it to go on. When the inevitable incidents come, we shall protest that Japan had no legal right to do what she did, and was doing it in pursuit of an illegal purpose. More irritation, more conviction of our righteous course in protecting war trade to China will arise.

We do not argue that these incidents carry any immediate danger of involvement in the war on the part either of Great Britain or the United States. But we are convinced that the policy of allowing them to happen and then protesting against them is lighting a fuse that will either ignominiously sputter out in the end or detonate a heavy explosion. No person in his senses can doubt that the Japanese army and navy will now let nothing stand in the way of their project to subdue China. They have gone too far to withdraw. The leap in the dark has been taken. Their "face" and prestige are deeply involved. They are certain to cause great injury to the persons and property of Americans and Englishmen. No statement that they are violating international law, no long series of protests will stop them. They know that Great Britain is seriously alarmed about the situation in Europe, that the people of the United States do not want to fight. If we allow war trade to continue and grow bigger, if we allow American ships to traverse war zones laden with contraband, we shall have more and more to protest about. Eventually we shall either have to give up any attempt to enforce our protests, or we shall have to back them up by force of arms.

In the meantime we shall be keeping alive a bitter controversy and stimulating the growth of war sentiment in this country. We shall be permitting a substantial enlargement of those interests that will want to use war sentiment to their own advantage. If we do not fight, no good will have been done by the protests; Japan will not allow us to bring real help to China, nor will she safeguard our property interests if they should stand in her way. If we do fight, we shall do exactly what the American people now fear most of all. And let nobody assume lightly that in the end we could not be brought to the point of fighting, or that Britain could not. Such a war would be senseless of course; it would cost a hundred times more than the stakes it was fought for. But such calculations do not control action when the crisis arrives.

The British, though they are not prepared for war in the Far East at the moment, certainly do not intend to give up their heavy investment in China without a struggle. They would probably accept Japanese dominance in the northern provinces; they will not fight even to save Shanghai. But if the tide of battle swings southward—as it is likely to do if China continues to resist—the hand of the British government will be forced by financial and imperial interests. Japan cannot ultimately defeat a unified China without interfering with trade in the Hongkong area, and this is a property that Britain would scarcely relinquish without resistance. The farther south the war develops, the closer we get to British intervention. But Britain does not want to threaten force alone. She needs American help, and she sees the chance of obtaining this in a continuation of our traditional policy of condemning aggression, of maintaining the open door in China and of preserving the integrity of the Chinese nation. The campaign to enlist our support in a unified stand against Japan is already well under way. And Secretary Hull, like a good little boy, is following the lead of the British Foreign Office in this matter.

It is objected that the Neutrality Act was framed with a European war in mind; that it was never intended to apply to a situation such as now exists in the Far East. It is argued that any hard-and-fast policy adopted in advance of a situation which it is not possible to foresee in all its details is likely to be inapropos. But the virtue of the Neutrality Act lies exactly in the fact that it did lay down a definite policy in advance of any specific situation. Its framers knew only too well how difficult it would be, after the arrival of a crisis, to hold this nation to the policy that is most likely to ensure nonparticipation in war, in view of all the protesting interests, the trade losses, the propaganda and the sympathies that would be aroused. Also the fact that many of its provisions were made mandatory, without regard to the effect on any particular belligerent, exempts the government from any charge of favoritism in applying it. And certainly its provisions are extremely relevant to the kind of trouble we are now beginning to get into.

The choice before the administration is clear; either (1) it proceeds on the assumption that it can and should bring compulsion to bear on Japan to cease its attempt to conquer China, with all the damage to Occidental interests that that attempt necessarily involves, or (2) it obeys the law and adopts as its main purpose keeping this nation out of trouble in the Far East. The early decisions are the crucial ones. If Mr. Roosevelt continues to pursue the first course, he will be responsible for the possible consequences, in a sense that no previous war President has ever been. For he is forewarned, and he will be adopting the policy in defiance of the expressed will of Congress and the people.

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The CIO Survives in Akron

"THE CIO, she blow up," the wire services quoted a Youngstown, Ohio, steel striker as saying on his way back to work two months ago. And anti-union employers all over the country immediately started digging a wishful grave for the Committee for Industrial Organization.

Last week in Akron, forty-eight miles from Youngstown, thousands of rubber workers demonstrated that this grave-digging was a bit premature. In two National Labor Relations Board elections, 16,676 Goodyear and Goodrich workers voted for the United Rubber Workers of America as their collective-bargaining agency against 4,027 who opposed the CIO union. The Goodrich-union victory ratio was ten to one, the Goodyear ratio eight to three.

The URWA victory was completely conclusive, the climax of a sustained two-year march that began when the rubber unionists broke away from American Federation of Labor dominance with only a handful of members. The march forward included two strikes, one at Goodyear and one last spring at Firestone. The Firestone strike ended in a signed union contract, the first with any major rubber company. The contract did not prove to be the signal, however, for the other two major Akron companies to give in and sign also. They continued to hold out. Goodrich, in fact, even refused to concede the jurisdiction of the Labor Board in ordering an election, advancing the ancient interstate-commerce argument. The union at once renewed requests for contracts after the election results were announced.

The Goodyear election served to illustrate the latest technique in anti-union tactics. The company maintained a tight-lipped silence, but well before the voting a supposedly new "independent" group of workers became exceedingly vociferous. They held meetings, bought newspaper advertisements and released statements to the newspapers, all aimed at the union. Two days before the balloting, they imported Senator Rush Holt of West Virginia to make a radio speech attacking John L. Lewis, amid the unusual spectacle of union attacks against this "outside agitator." Leaders of this group declare that they will continue their campaign against the CIO.

The sweeping victory in the elections, the first of that size since the steel strike, came close on the heels of another advance for Akron labor, the municipal primary election in which Labor's Non-Partisan League carried a mayoral candidate and ten of eleven city-council candidates to nominations on the Democratic ballot. Both CIO and A.F. of L. rank-and-file unionists worked together in the political campaign. It is significant that William Green greeted this striking demonstration of successful labor solidarity with an order to the Akron Central Labor Union to expel all CIO locals, despite their overwhelming numerical superiority. The central body followed his order but, at the same time, reproved the Executive Council of the A.F. of L. and made plans to preserve a united labor front through a separate council.

The UAW Meets

ONE OF the most important gatherings in American labor history was the convention of the United Automobile Workers of America last week at Milwaukee. It was important for several reasons: 1. This union represents the first and greatest success of the Committee for Industrial Organization, which has such present and potential significance in American life. 2. In the short period of a year, it has organized most of the automobile industry, one of the hardest anti-union nuts to crack in America. 3. Its record of sheer growth in that time is a staggering one: membership has increased from 30,000 to 400,000; treasury from $30,000 to $400,000, not counting money in local war chests; number of contracts from 16 to 400; universal forty-hour week instead of hours running as high as sixty in some cases; millions of dollars gained in additional wages, including more pay for people who were getting as little as 20 cents an hour.

The most important action of the convention was the decision that a strong effort shall be made to unionize the Ford plants. General Motors, Chrysler and nearly all the small independents are already signed up; Ford remains the last holdout, a bitter opponent of unionism and an advocate of paternalism that is often far from paternalistic. A fund of $400,000 will be raised for the campaign.

Next in importance was the healing of the factional breach within the union. President Homer Martin and Vice-President Wyndham Mortimer were the spokesmen for groups who were in sharp disagreement, and the quarrel had grown so bitter that the future of the UAW was imperiled. With a realization of this danger, and aided by the presence of John L. Lewis, the opposing groups arrived at what seems to be a workable compromise. Of the members of the executive board, fifteen now represent the Martin forces, and eight the Mortimer.

The conservative press, looking for excuses to attack the UAW, found one in its endorsement of the sit-down strike. It is fashionable nowadays to say that public opinion has turned overwhelmingly against the sit-down, that Washington now admits it is illegal, and that it must not be seen again. There is no need to go through this argument once more, but of one thing the country may be sure: no amount of official opposition is going to prevent the use of the sit-down, by groups working under suitable conditions, when they feel that the employers are deliberately betraying the terms of an agreement. Those who object to the sit-down should use their energies in supporting a policy that would make such strikes unnecessary.

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By the Manufacturers, for the Manufacturers

ONE OF the worst things about the Tydings-Miller price-maintenance bill is the way in which it was allowed to sneak through Congress without any serious opposition. It is remarkable that President Roosevelt, after the warning he issued four months ago to Congress, should have signed a bill incorporating the very philosophy he then opposed. The parliamentary device that Senator Tydings used to obtain passage of his measure is as old as the hills, but still effective; he attached the price-maintenance provisions to a "must" bill, in this case the appropriations bill for the District of Columbia.

Almost as soon as the Tydings rider was joined with the appropriations bill in July it began a rapid course through Congress. It was passed in the Senate by a unanimous vote and, despite the promises of a desperate fight against the measure by Sam Rayburn, the majority leader, it slipped through the House easily in less than a quarter of an hour. Then on August 18 the bill was signed by Mr. Roosevelt and became the law. He pleaded that he had no other course, since a veto would have left the District of Columbia without appropriations; but it is hard to believe that if he had turned the bill down Congress would not have passed the appropriation measure with the obnoxious price-maintenance rider omitted.

Perhaps the surprise aroused by the President's action in approving the measure overlooked several factors, such as the power of the lobby of the National Association of Retail Druggists, the tactical difficulty of divorcing the price-maintenance rider from the appropriations measure or the possible fear of the President that an angry Congress might have overridden his veto.

At any rate the bill has now been passed and the country will have to begin to get accustomed to the changes that will be brought about by the new legality for contracts for the maintenance of resale prices for trademarked products. The chief of these effects will be, of course, increased prices that must be paid by the consumer of goods of this sort. A second is the probability that the enforcement of the anti-trust laws by the administration will be seriously crippled, despite the fact that Attorney General Cummings announced in April that these laws would be enforced with new vigor. There is very little point, in such cases as that now pending against the Aluminum Company of America, for example, for the government to judge a corporation to be a trust and then be unable to stop its price-fixing activity; yet, under the Tydings-Miller act, all such a corporation needs do to continue price-fixing is have its products trademarked.

Passage of the bill also means that many of the cases of the Federal Trade Commission awaiting hearings in court are either greatly weakened or completely invalidated. A goodly number of the pending cases of the Trade Commission are against the price-fixing activities of large liquor distillers, Seagram, Schenley, Hiram Walker, National Distillers and others, and it is hard to see how these can still be prosecuted in the face of the new law. Enforcement officials, commenting upon the passage of the law, said that higher cost of liquor, resulting from fixed retail prices, will constitute a strong incentive to bootleggers.

On the other side of the picture there are arguments that must also be taken into consideration, especially the point that price-fixing of this sort will put an end to the cutthroat competition that certainly does exist in a number of fields. It will, for example, relieve the plight of the retail druggist who is forced into competition with cut rates. Sometimes these are "loss leaders," offered to get people into the store and sell them something else; sometimes they are low prices offered by merchants who sell too cheaply through stupidity and go bankrupt soon thereafter.

While it is possible to cite numerous examples which either support or oppose the philosophy of the new law, no one can deny that the principle of the Tydings-Miller act contradicts the tenets of a freely competitive economic society. Price-maintenance represents one of the main rigidities that interrupt the nice theoretical adjustments of supply and demand. Of course, our economy, in a great many areas, is no longer "freely" competitive, or even competitive at all, and that is why planning (of which price-maintenance is certainly a part) has become necessary. But if we are to abandon the idea of competition and go in for planning of this sort, the Tydings act is a bad beginning. We should certainly not entrust the job of deciding what prices are to be fixed, and at what levels, to a few private manufacturers of trademarked products. In all history they have demonstrated that their interest is not in the welfare of the community but, oddly, in the welfare of the manufacturers of trademarked products.

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Now, at Last: Housing

The Meaning of the Wagner-Steagall Act

ONE FACT should be remembered about the first session of the Seventy-fifth Congress. It was preceded by the most spectacular personal victory ever accorded a leader in this country, and accompanied by constant hysterical warnings of "dictatorship" from the reactionary Right. Yet the single important left-wing bill passed in eight long months cannot be called an "administration measure" save by exaggerated courtesy. The United States Housing Act of 1937 is, rather, a popular measure, reminding the country that the last election was also a triumph of Left over Right. Its passage found democracy functioning rather better than usual in America.

The Housing Act is no fond paternal gift from the White House to the slum dwellers. Aside from a few slogans and rhetorical promises, the President did nothing for this bill. His subordinates in the Treasury and in some of the non-Cabinet agencies tried to sabotage it, while his own sincere public statements about its provisions were misinformed and therefore highly damaging. At the last moment, the administration machine cleared the way for its enactment—but only because *something* had to be passed after the Court-bill holocaust, and the housing bill had been maneuvered into the most strategic position. And even then, when the bill was confronted with crippling amendments and deletions both in the Senate and in the House, the White House took but little interest in its form, except to guarantee that its benefits be kept completely under the control of the Executive.

There are only two reasons why we have a housing act on the books today at all—let alone one which, though battle-scarred, is still in fairly workable shape. One reason is the enormous increase in the demand for public housing in the past three years. The other is the dogged persistence, the ability and the independence of Senator Robert F. Wagner. He alone wrote the housing plank into the Democratic platform; he alone shouldered the responsibility to fulfill the pledge.

The increasing demand for low-rent housing and slum clearance has been reflected on the Hill. In 1935, when public-housing legislation was first proposed by Senator Wagner and Mr. Ellenbogen, not even all its friends realized the serious enterprise in which they were engaged. Many people thought of "housing" as merely a fancy new frill concocted by the social workers. The average Congressman took no interest in it whatsoever. Then labor, first in scattered local groups and later nationally, began to take an active part. State and local housing authorities were set up by special legislation. Welfare and religious organizations put housing at the head of their lists. By 1936, housing began to look like a real issue on Capitol Hill. But, lacking any real push from the White House, the Wagner-Ellenbogen bill, after having been passed by the Senate, died in Mr. Steagall's Banking and Currency Committee.

This year the attitude of our elected national representatives changed. A much heralded "building boom" had gone into an adolescent decline. The Large Scale Housing Division of the Federal Housing Administration (which had grandiosely guaranteed to remove the need for public housing) was an obvious flop. A general housing shortage was clamping down all over the country. High rents, enforced doubling up and the lack of vacancies turned housing into a primary local political issue in many cities. Governors, mayors and city councils reinforced the demand. Thirty-one states, *in advance* of the federal action absolutely essential to any accomplishment on their part, had passed housing-authority-enabling legislation. The American Federation of Labor made the Wagner-Steagall bill number one on the "must" list.

The net result was that no Congressman from an urban district would say publicly that he was against government subsidies for low-rent housing, any more than he would admit he was "against labor." Everyone now was "for housing"—but this resulted, of course, in a fantastic mushroom growth of theories as to how this housing was to be done. For a time it appeared that every office in Washington harbored some "housing expert" who either had just seen, or was just about to see, the President or Mr. Morgenthau with some bright new "solution." For a time there even seemed danger that Mr. Morgenthau might become a housing expert. But, as the demand grew more coherent, and housing began to look like a serious business not to be cast aside easily when once initiated, the White House seemed to be more and more inclined to back down or postpone the whole matter. A bewildering barrage of hit-or-miss criticisms and counter-suggestions was laid down by the Treasury, and by the little coterie of bankers' boys in the Federal Housing Administration and the Federal Reserve Board.

The deeply significant thing was that, in the face of all this labor, the local housing authorities, interested national welfare and religious organizations, and the mayors and city councils, stood stanchly behind the specific provisions and program of the Wagner-Steagall bill. And even with this support, Senator Wagner is the only man in

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the United States who could have pulled a housing bill out of the mess this year. His fight was similar to the one he waged for the Labor Relations Act —where the administration "experts" were still drafting soft-pedaling verbiage when his honest bill was finally passed.

An additional difficulty was that times have changed in the Senate, generally regarded as the more liberal body in large matters of policy. In the bitter week-long debate on the housing bill one could feel the transformation in the senatorial temper. Many Senators were just plain sick of playing the liberal "game." They used to go along with Bob Wagner out of personal friendship or because they believed his ideas were in the saddle. If they voted against him, they weren't nasty about it. But not any more. It was easy to sense a really vindictive spite and bitterness against him. The bill was finally passed by the Senate by a vote of sixty-four to sixteen, but not until a series of half-baked amendments had been adopted. Senator Wagner and the ever alert and intelligent Senator Robert M. La Follette alone had a thorough understanding of the bill.

The blithe irresponsibility of the Southern prima donnas who put across their extemporaneous amendments brought home one of the most serious problems that progressive democratic governments must face: namely, that legislation to establish new government responsibility in *productive enterprise* is necessarily much more complicated and delicate than any simple "aye" or "nay" question. Three unobtrusive technical words can insert a monkey-wrench—and may be adopted by well meaning legislators without realizing what they have done. Intelligent political organization and pressure can make the majority vote "aye," but it is a much more subtle problem to induce a liberal Senator to sit down before the vote and understand that cities cannot borrow 15 percent of the cost of a housing project when the other 85 percent is secured by a primary lien.

The House, probably due to its more direct contact with the increasing demand at home for housing measures, was more realistic and better informed than the Senate. Almost any member of the Banking and Currency Committee, made up largely of rural conservatives and headed by Mr. Steagall of Ozark, Alabama, was better able to explain and even defend the bill than any other Senator except Wagner or La Follette.

One thing was certain to anyone who heard the debate in the House on August 18. A national program of loans and subsidies to local authorities to build low-rent housing and clear slums is here to stay. Even the out-and-out tories took the trouble to assemble facts about the housing situation. Mr. Clyde Williams stated the average view when he said: "We must recognize that there is a part of our population which can never be home owners, and, this being true, we must provide homes for such people through a public subsidy."

This is the first great gain. There is now unqualified recognition of the fact that families who cannot afford safe and sanitary housing must be relieved—not by attempts to unload on them speculative, jerry-built shacks which they cannot afford, not by fanciful dreams about prefabricated Utopias, not by euphemisms about higher wages—but by direct governmental aid, responsibility and initiative, here and now.

Now, this is a radical step. Those who advocate the redistribution of wealth through higher taxes must realize that a tax program always follows and never precedes the recognition of the need for public expenditure. The dam and the reservoir must be built before the water from the springs can be piped into it.

Generally, liberal legislation is systematically pared down in the course of passage. But in the one all-important matter of public subsidy allowed per dwelling unit, which determines whether the housing will be really low-rental or not, the Housing Act is just as good as the day it was introduced —and much better than the housing proposals introduced in 1935 and 1936. As passed, the federal subsidy permissible under the annual contribution scheme would have an effect upon the lowering of rentals equivalent to more than a 100-percent write-off of the capital cost, including land. The original 1935 Wagner bill provided a federal capital grant of only 30 percent of the cost of labor and materials.

These federal annual contributions alone will reduce rentals actually charged to about 50 percent of the "economic rent" (*i.e.*, the sum needed to pay all interest and amortization charges, plus upkeep and administration, plus full local taxes). The additional local contributions now required, which must be 20 percent of the federal contributions, will bring the scale down to 40 percent of the "economic rent." It suffices to compare this uncompromising recognition of permanent public responsibility with the payroll and other regressive taxes which support practically *in toto* the "social security" program.

The local share of the annual contribution will usually be made in the form of partial tax remission or exemption. The full requirement could be met with exemption from less than half of normal taxes in most cases. Since more than twenty states already have complete tax exemption written into their housing acts, this condition should work no great hardship—at least in most of the larger cities. There are, however, some reasonable objections to tax exemption as a general form of local housing subsidy, and it is to be hoped that some communities will endeavor to make their contributions in outright cash and services.

The desirable principle is thus embodied in the Housing Act that the main part of the public cost, amounting to five-sixths of the annual contributions and 90 percent of the original financing in the form of self-liquidating loans, at low interest, shall be borne by the federal and not by the local govern-

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ments. This is of great value, not only because of the present incapacity of the local authorities to provide more, but also because in the long run only through the medium of the federal income, inheritance and excise taxes can the public expenditures for low-rent housing be coördinated with a general tax program falling upon those who can afford to pay.

Another fundamental virtue in the Housing Act is that most of the administrative responsibility will now fall upon the local authorities, who will initiate projects, assemble land and do all the designing, construction and management.

There are, indeed, jokers in the law, but they are for the most part fairly superficial, and should be capable of change by force of public demand when their impeding effect becomes obvious to the people concerned. The unit-cost restriction and the limitation of 10 percent of the funds to any one state have already stirred up conservative newspapers in some of the larger Eastern cities which might be adversely affected by these provisions, to a jealous interest in housing which they never before evinced.

Perhaps the most potentially dangerous joker in the Act is the provision that every project must include demolition, condemnation or repair of a number of dwellings approximately equal to those constructed. There is a loophole—because the removal of old dwellings can be deferred in the event of a dangerous housing shortage. But this safeguard may not be enough to guarantee that a large share of the funds will not be used to bail out owners of overvalued real estate instead of to build new housing. This indefensible restriction must certainly be modified at the next session of Congress.

As for the requirements of 10-percent financing, and 20-percent local addition to the federal annual contributions—it may not prove harmful in the long run to have them tried out for a period. Most of the bill's supporters were of the opinion that any such flat conditions might prevent any housing program at all in certain localities, particularly in the smaller towns and villages. But a little pressure on the local authorities to see what they *can* do may be a good idea. If there are many towns which cannot function under such conditions, they will themselves be eager to get the Act changed so that they can share in its benefits.

The elimination of any recognition whatsoever of coöperative and other limited-profit projects is definitely bad. But if there is really a strong demand for this type of housing, it can probably be added later. Also, if it turns out that local official action is impossible in certain cases (for instance, mining communities), perhaps federal "demonstration projects" can also be restored next year.

Taking into account all the amendments and deletions, the Housing Act is still a radical piece of legislation—perhaps the most clear-cut and uncompromising adopted under the New Deal. Supporters of the bill were often discouraged during the three-weeks' battle just before the end of Congress. But, now that the smoke has lifted, what is left is by no means "holocaust housing" (as it was dubbed from the Senate gallery). It represents not merely a political victory, but a reasonable basis for the initial steps in a long-term housing program. The solid foundation is definitely intact. With a few minor changes here and there in the superstructure, this bill only needs continuing and larger appropriations and bond issues in order to meet the requirements of an almost infinitely expansible program.

Those who are interested in using this act to promote better housing conditions in their own communities should remember one thing. Ultimate success depends absolutely on the vigilant and intelligent participation of labor, consumer and tenant organizations in every step of the work. This entire half-billion-dollar program, even after all the houses are built, will be not so much an achievement as an instrument. And it must be an instrument not merely to better the physical conditions of 100,000 families or so.

All progressive legislation is double-edged, because almost invariably it gives more power to government. The question of who actually runs every branch of the government, federal and local, and for what ends, becomes more vital every time the state assumes more responsibility. A labor-relations act can be perverted to bring about compulsory arbitration; minimum restrictions on wages and hours can lower the pay of skilled workers; and even the best drafted housing act can be diverted to bail out the owners of speculative slum properties. It can also serve as an excuse for low cash wages.

If the Housing Act does not assist, and go hand in hand with, a general rise in the consumer's standard of demand, a better understanding of economic realities on the part of the average citizen, and more effective political power in the hands of the workers—then it will be a failure. If it assists in the accomplishment of any of these things, even in small measure, it will be a success.

CATHERINE BAUER.

Eight Melons

Late August. On the vine eight melons sleeping,
drinking the sunlight, sleeping, while below
their roots obscurely work in the dark loam;
eight belly-shaped, eight woman-colored melons
swelling and feeding the seeds within them.
Guns
east of the mountain, at the Frenchman's Bridge;
they are fighting now at the cold river, they
are dying for tomorrow,
while the melons
sleep, smile in sleeping, in their bellies hoard
September sweetness, life to outlast the snow.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

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Spanish War Posters

HERE ARE eight posters selected from the scores that have been designed and printed in Madrid since the war. They are less flamboyant than the Barcelona posters (some of which are quite well done), and more businesslike than the posters from Valencia. Most of them are built round a simple slogan: "Vigilance in the rear-guard" (a necessary warning in view of the spies that have been infesting Loyalist Spain); "Enough of 'experiments'

VIGILANCIA
EN × LA × RETAGUARDIA
A CARGO DEL GOBIERNO Y DE SU JUNTA DELEGADA
el generalísimo
¡BASTA DE "ENSAYOS" Y "PROYECTOS"!
GANAR LA GUERRA
JJD
LIBROS Y PERIODICOS AL FRENTE
LA CULTURA ES TAMBIEN UN PARAPETO PARA ATACAR AL ENEMIGO
OFICINA-RECOGIDA-DELEGACION-PROPAGANDA-PRENSA-MEDINACELI, 2

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and 'projects'! First win the war!" (a warning to those who have been trying to found utopias that Franco would demolish); "Books and magazines to the front! Culture too is a weapon with which to attack the enemy."

At the upper left-hand corner of this page is a poster urging the building trades to enlist for work on the fortifications of Madrid; twenty thousand men enlisted. Just below it is a picture of a boot full of Italian soldiers trampling on Spain: "Rise against the Italian invasion!" On each page there is a poster addressed to Franco—"The Generalissimo"; both of them are samples of Spanish fantasy. "The Nationalists" (*Los Nacionales*) is grim Spanish humor. The Nationalists are embarked in a Portuguese vessel with a crew of Moorish soldiers. The slogan, "Up Spain!" is printed on the gallows from which Spain is hanging with a rope around its neck.—M. C.

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Soviet China

IV: *Moscow and the Chinese Communists*

IT IS possible to divide the history of Russian-Chinese relations from 1923 to 1937 roughly into three periods. The first, from 1923 to 1927, was a period of *de facto* alliance between the Soviet Union and the National Revolutionaries, consisting of a bloc composed of strange bedfellows aligned under the banners of the Kuomintang and the Communist Parties, and aiming at the overthrow by revolution of the then existing government of China and the achievement of China's independence from foreign imperialism. This exciting enterprise ended with the triumph of the Kuomintang reaction and the founding of the Nanking government, which brought about a compromise with imperialism and the severance of relations with the Soviet Union.

From 1927 to 1933 there was a period of isolation of Russia from China, and of complete insulation by Nanking against Russian influence. This era closed when Moscow resumed diplomatic relations with Nanking late in 1933. The third period began with a lukewarm Nanking-Moscow rapprochement, embarrassed considerably by the continued heavy civil war between Nanking and the Chinese Communists. It was to end dramatically, early in 1937, when a partial reconciliation would be effected between the Communists and the Kuomintang, with new possibilities opened up for Sino-Russian coöperation. The ultimate design this coöperation will take is not yet clear.

The three periods of Russian-Chinese relationship mentioned above accurately reflect also the changes that have taken place in the character of the Comintern during recent years. They illustrate the stages of its transition from an organization of international incendiaries into an instrument of the national policy of the Soviet Union. It is impossible here to enter into the dialectics of the extremely complex series of causes that have brought about these changes, but it is pertinent to see how in the main they affected and were affected by the Chinese revolution.

As everyone who has studied this subject knows, the crisis of the Chinese revolution coincided with a crisis in Russia and in the Comintern, expressed in the struggle between Trotskyism and Stalinism for theoretical and practical control of the forces of world revolution. Had Stalin not waited till 1924 to advance his slogan, "socialism in one country," had the issue been fought out and had he been able to dominate the Comintern before then, quite possibly the "intervention" in China might never have begun. Such a speculation in any case is idle. When Stalin did develop his fight the line in China had already been established.

The active military, political, financial and intellectual collaboration given to the Chinese Nationalist revolution was until 1926 under the direction chiefly of Zinoviev, who was strongly influenced by Trotsky. Until then Stalin's adherents had not yet decisively overpowered the Trotsky theory of "permanent revolution." But from early 1926 onward, Stalin became chiefly responsible for the affairs and policies of the Comintern as well as the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and it will nowhere be disputed that he has tightened his grasp on both organizations ever since.

Stalin led the Comintern which gave the Chinese Communists their tactical line and directives throughout 1926 and on through the catastrophe of the spring of 1927. During those swift months, in which disaster gathered like a mighty typhoon above the heads of the Chinese Communists, Stalin's line was subjected to continuous bombardment from the opposition, dominated by Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev. Although as Comintern chairman Zinoviev had fully supported the line of Communist coöperation with the Kuomintang, he now violently attacked this same line, as carried out by Stalin. Particularly after Chiang Kai-shek's first treachery, the abortive attempt at a coup d'état in Canton in 1926, Zinoviev predicted an inevitable counter-revolution, in which the bourgeoisie would compromise with imperialism and turn traitor to the masses.

At least a year before Chiang Kai-shek's second and successful coup d'état, Zinoviev began demanding the separation of the Communists from the Kuomintang, party of the national bourgeoisie, which he realized was incapable of carrying out the two main tasks of the revolution—anti-imperialism (*i.e.*, the overthrow of foreign domination of China) and "anti-feudalism," or the destruction of the landlord-gentry rule in rural China. Equally early, Trotsky began urging the formation of soviets and an independent Chinese Red Army. The opposition in general predicted the failure of the "bourgeois-democratic" revolution if Stalin's line were continued. And this prophecy was of course fulfilled.

There is, however, abundant reason to believe that had the opposition's objections been made the basis of a Jacobin policy in China the tragedy would have been even more severe. Trotsky's theoretical criticisms were, as usual, brilliant, and his advice had some connection with the actual peculiarities of the situation. But not, as so often happens, very much. Certainly his "Problems of the Chinese Revolution," which contains most of his remarks on the period, is a loosely argued work, full of an insouciant disregard for the objective limitations of the

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living situation at that time. It clearly suggests that the only alternative he had to offer to the Comintern policy, which ended in catastrophe, was a policy which would have ended in a much earlier and more complete catastrophe.

Stalin defended himself, after the debacle, by ridiculing as non-Marxist the Trotskyist contentions that the tactical line of the Comintern had been the main cause of the failure. "Comrade Kamenev," declared Stalin, "said that the policy of the Communist International was responsible for the defeat of the Chinese revolution, and that we 'bred Cavaignacs in China.' . . . How can it be asserted that the tactics of a party can abolish or reverse the relation of class forces? What are we to say of people who forget the relation of class forces in time of revolution and who try to explain everything by the tactics of a party? Only one thing can be said of such people—that they have abandoned Marxism."

And it is in fact hard for any objective student of the whole epoch to escape the conclusion that the Trotskyists greatly exaggerated the importance of Comintern mistakes, while they minimized the overwhelmingly adverse factors in the situation. They were obviously more interested in forging from the Comintern's errors new shells for their artillery barrage against Stalin than they were in the immediate fate of China. Their assault was anyway unsuccessful. The party as a whole remained unconvinced of Stalin's incompetence.

The important change that occurred in the Comintern after Stalin's victory and the adoption of five-year plans and a passion for tractors, was that active schemes to promote world revolution were temporarily set aside, while the revolutionary energies of the Soviet Union were concentrated in a mighty offensive of socialist construction. The Comintern ceased being the dominant thing and instead became a kind of bureau of the Soviet Union, gradually turning into a glorified advertising agency for the prosaic labors of the builders of socialism in one country. Its main direction altered from attempts to create revolution by force, or active intervention, to bringing about revolutions by example. Because the Soviet Union, the "base of the world revolution," needed peace, the Comintern became a powerful organ of peace propaganda throughout the world.

It would be tedious here to enter further into Stalin-Trotsky polemics. The important thing is that Stalin won, and his policy dominated the future activities of the Comintern in China. After 1927 these were for a while almost nil. Russian organs in China were closed, Russian Communists were killed or driven from the country, the flow of financial, military and political help from Russia ceased, and the Chinese Communist Party was thrown into great confusion, and for a time lost contact with the Comintern. *The Chinese Soviet movement and the Chinese Red Army began spontaneously, under purely Chinese leadership,* and they did not in fact get much applause from Russia till after the Sixth Congress, when the Communist International gave its post-natal sanction.

The role of the Comintern in the Chinese revolution since then has been colossally magnified. Some organs were, it is true, covertly restored; delegates were sent to a few big cities to establish contact with Chinese Communists; Chinese students continued to be educated in Russia and secretly returned to carry on revolutionary work; and a little money dribbled in. But it became utterly impossible for Russia to have any physical connection whatever with the Red areas, which had no seaport and were entirely surrounded by a ring of hostile troops. Whereas in the past there had been hundreds of Comintern workers in China there were now two or three, often almost isolated from society as a whole, seldom able to risk a stay of more than a few months. Whereas millions of dollars had formerly gone to Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists, now a thousand or so at a time trickled in to the Reds. And whereas the whole Soviet Union had backed the great revolution of 1925-27, the Chinese Communist movement was now aided only by a Comintern which could no longer command the vast resources of the "base of the world revolution," but had to limp along as a kind of poor step-child which might be officially disinherited whenever it did anything malapropos.

Actually, the financial help given to the Chinese Reds by Moscow or the Comintern during this decade seems to have been amazingly small. When the Noulens were arrested in Shanghai in 1932 and "convicted" in Nanking as chief Far Eastern agents of the Comintern, the complete evidence which the police produced showed that total outpayments for the whole Orient (not just China) had not at most exceeded the equivalent of about $15,000 per month. This is a trifle compared with the vast sums poured into China to support Christian propaganda, which is mostly capitalist propaganda, or to support Japanese and Nazi-Fascist propaganda. Also it is rather pitiful in contrast, for example, with America's $50,000,000 wheat loan to Nanking in 1933—the proceeds of which were of decisive value to Chiang Kai-shek's civil war against the Reds.

America, England, Germany and Italy supplied Nanking with great quantities of airplanes, tanks, guns and munitions to destroy the Chinese soviets. The American army released scores of officers to train the Chinese air force, which demolished hundreds of towns in Red China, and Italian and German instructors actually led some of the most destructive bombing expeditions themselves—just as they do in Spain today. To Chiang Kai-shek's aid Nazi Germany sent its ablest general, von Seeckt, aided by a big staff of Prussian officers.

It may be said categorically, and no foreign military attaché of intelligence will disagree with the statement, that the Chinese Reds have fought with infinitely less foreign help than any army of modern Chinese history.

EDGAR SNOW.

THE END.

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On the Labor Front

I: Organizing the Radio Men

THE GRANDIOSE scheme of the American Federation of Labor to organize all performers and announcers in radio, announced on August 16, brings the A.F. of L. into conflict with an organization that has done an interesting bit of pioneering in this field. Roy S. Langham, president of the American Guild of Radio Announcers and Producers, says he has no present intention of withdrawing from the territory his organization already had won long before the bogey of possible organizing efforts by the CIO scared the A.F. of L. into belated action. The Guild of Radio Announcers and Producers as yet has made no move to affiliate with either the A.F. of L. or the CIO and professes a desire to keep on friendly terms with both.

The Guild's first contract was signed on May 27 with the New York City station of the Columbia Broadcasting System, and the organization represented 100 percent of the announcers and producers at WABC. The contract went into effect on June 1, to run for five years, with provision for annual reopening for negotiation of all clauses except recognition of the Guild as sole bargaining agent for the workers within its jurisdiction. In the event of a deadlock in these negotiations or in the application of the contract to a specific case, both sides agree to arbitrate according to the rules of the American Arbitration Association.

The immediate effect is to raise the wages of announcers and production men to nearly the kind of money people always thought they were getting, and to shorten the work week to forty hours (this excludes cases where announcers are temporarily committed to a longer week in fulfilment of unexpired commercial contracts). For the first time, also, the station undertakes to pay its announcers directly, over and above the minimum regular wage, a fee for commercially sponsored programs.

A few days after WABC had signed up, officials of WMCA, the New York station of the Intercity Broadcasting System, signed a temporary agreement with its announcing and producing staff, to run until December 31 of this year. The hour provisions are the same as at WABC and the wage increases amount to about 20 percent.

Wor, New York, WJSV, Washington, and WBT, Charlotte, have signed up more recently. At WORC, Worcester, negotiations are going forward for radio's first completely vertical contract, covering every worker except the office staff. The sound-effects department in both the Columbia and the National stations in New York are organizing. Altogether, twenty-two chapters are functioning, in New England, New York, the Middle West and the South, and a new chapter is forming for free lances.

The Guild is not affiliated with any other labor organization, but is discussing working agreements with several. On June 28 it voted at a general meeting to open its membership to all the skilled crafts within the industry. It will make no attempt, however, to draw in those workers who are already organized or organizing in a previously existing legitimate labor union. This policy is expected to accomplish the complete unionization of the industry, by the double process of direct recruiting and of stimulating more vigorous action by such unions as the American Radio Telegraphists' Association among the engineers, the Newspaper Guild among publicity and promotion writers, and Actors' Equity. The musicians, of course, are left entirely to their own already effective organization.

The principal leadership at present seems to lie in the originator and unpaid national president, Roy S. Langham, a production man at WABC, and in Gerald Dickler, the Guild's attorney. Mr. Dickler is now preparing two cases for presentation to the National Labor Relations Board, on the ground of punitive discharge for organizing activities.

J. K. ATKINS.

II: The Farmers Form a Union

THE DAIRY farmers have never sunk to so low a level as now. Why, even when the government buys fertilizer for them, these farmers merely lose more money producing more milk to make the distributors richer."

Elmer Gleasman explained things to a small group of New York City consumers seated on the stone porch of his taxidermy shop, facing the square in the little town of Boonville, N. Y. Mr. Gleasman is also a dairy farmer and secretary-treasurer of the Oneida County branch of the new Dairy Farmers' Union.

Using trade-union technique, the Union has enrolled about 5,000 milk producers in a dozen upstate counties of New York since its birth last October. The initiation fee is ten cents per milk-cow; dues are two cents per cow monthly. The one aim of the organization is to give dairy farmers control of the New York market through collective bargaining with dealers. Members of the union characterize the Sheffield and Borden companies in much the same way that union steel workers speak of Tom Girdler.

Although the Union represents only a small percentage of the estimated 100,000 dairy farmers of New York, its officers claim dominance over the richest dairy section, producing more than one-half of the state's milk. The first skirmish with the dis-

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tributors began August 1 when union members delivering to twelve Sheffield condensing plants in the northern part of the state struck for $1.55 a hundredweight instead of the $1.50 offered. Another strike started August 25 at Pulaski and Lacona. With both controversies unsettled and the farmers taking their milk to cheese plants, the movement for a statewide strike is spreading. Dairymen at Boonville have voted almost unanimously for a tie-up.

The farmer's grievance is that grain and labor costs are practically double what they were in 1933, but only a fraction more than two cents of the price paid by the consumer for a quart of milk comes back to the producer. There is strong talk and a likely chance of a milk strike by fall, when the surplus disappears. The farmer's 2.2 cents is figured on a basis of $1.35 per 100 pounds of fluid milk, less deductions for delivery and for average butterfat content. In 1933 a hundredweight of milk bought a hundredweight of grain; today two hundredweight of milk buy one hundredweight of grain. Labor costs, the farmers say, are also double.

Last summer a milk strike under the leadership of the Piseck brothers was averted when the fluid-milk price for producers was raised to $2.90 per hundredweight. The new Rogers-Allen law that supplanted milk-price control in New York is supposed to create collective bargaining between producers and distributors. The Dairy Farmers' Union ridicules the plan. The Sheffield Producers' Coöperative Association is so dominated by the distributor, the union asserts, that in effect the law will result in Sheffield bargaining with itself.

Under the leadership of Archie Wright, chairman of the general organization committee, the union is sending organizers throughout the dairy country. They talk trade unionism to farmers who have never been able to stick together. One organizer used to enroll members for the structural-steel workers, and remembers when he was chased by the Boston police. There are others like him—men who were born on the farm, and who have come back to the farm from railroading, construction work and other occupations.

For the struggle ahead, the union is seeking and getting the support of consumers and trade unionists. Miss Susan Jenkins, vice chairman of the Milk Consumers' Protective Committee of New York City, told 2,000 farmers and members of their families in Boonville that her organization demands a fair price for the producer, to be paid by reducing the dealer's share. Seated in automobiles parked two and three deep around the town square, the farmers tooted their applause.

The Committee made good on its promise of cooperation by putting picket lines before the Borden and Sheffield offices in New York City not long ago. Miss Jenkins, planning an organized protest against two one-cent retail-price increases in quick succession, points out that the farmers and consumers are still the suckers. With prices from the two largest distributors jacked up to the level of last March, the low-income groups cannot buy all of the milk they need; and the farmer is getting more than one cent *less* than he did when the same retail price prevailed five months ago. The one cent plus is taken by the distributors, whose 1936 profits showed a tremendous rise over those of 1935.

ALEXANDER L. CROSBY.

Muncie Looks at Middletown

EXCEPT possibly for George A. Ball's sudden burst into the national limelight as purchaser —and seller—of the Van Sweringen railroad empire, Muncie, Indiana, is chiefly known to fame as the original of "Middletown" and "Middletown in Transition," two sociological portraits by Robert S. and Helen Merrell Lynd. The Lynds, especially in the second of these books, say much about "cultural conflicts" and consequent "ambivalences." But none of Muncie's ambivalences is more interesting than that which has to do with the local attitude toward Middletown.

While Muncie is Middletown, Muncie is not so sure that Middletown is Muncie. However, there's a lot more to a really good ambivalence than that. In the interval between the two books, Muncie was uncertain whether to be proud or resentful over having been described in the first of them as the typical —or was it the ideal?—American small city. One said one thing, and others said a number of other things. Much depended, of course, on one's opinion as to whether the Lynds were praising or blaming —which was a tribute to their objectivity—and upon what the outside world might think of Middletown, or, more particularly, Muncie. In the city directory for 1936-37 these words led all the rest: "Muncie selected as most typical American city of its size and classification for a general survey by the Institute of Social and Religious Research of New York, in 1925." But "Middletown," the result of that survey, was not mentioned.

There was a great deal of pre-publication interest in the second book, and a widespread rumor that the Lynds were now going to make amends for what they had said about Muncie in the first. Excitement was heightened when a nationally known photographer, Margaret Bourke-White, arrived to take some documentary pictures for Life. The book was published on April 24 and the Bourke-White photographs appeared May 10.

The great complaint about the photographs was summed up in a newspaper, which asked, "Where are the pictures of the good, substantial middle class? . . . Why does the magazine show only the two extremes—the wealthy families at the one end and the poorer families at the other?"

As for the book, one newspaper, in a column called "Downtown at Noon," remarked testily: "That super social psychoanalyst, Robert S. Lynd . . . gives the average citizen a large, acute pain in the neck." A commentator in The Muncie Press was

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more tolerant: "Most of what Mr. Lynd says is true; some of it is unqualifiedly false. . . . Probably it is good for us. . . . A sleeping dog stirs when a flea bites him, but he soon goes back to sleep, even if the flea goes on biting." The Morning Star said editorially: ". . . Muncie residents must admit that they glory in the invaluable publicity that is being given them. . . . If conditions exist here that they do not like, they should try to correct them." The Star also printed a five-column review of the book by a member of the newspaper staff, Paul Kelso, who gave a notably fair and surprisingly liberal recapitulation of the book's contents.

Recently I had a letter from a friend in Muncie who offered this: "Muncie may have more liberalism than Lynd suspects—as the review in The New Republic suggested—but what good is it going to do if the liberals keep quiet and don't put up a fight? Yes, I know they want security, but do they have it? And for how long? . . . Some women across the table from us were talking of Lynd and his books, mentioning some of the things he had said about Muncie and the Muncians. One of them climaxed the conversation with, 'Well, we in Middletown don't care much for New Yorkers, either.' That seemed to settle the matter."

RAYMOND G. FULLER.

The Teaser

AFTER that last week in Boston, Harcourt decided to fire Beatrice. She was through. Even the gallery didn't clap for encores, whatever she gave them. Harcourt didn't want to do it, but she was fifty-two years old and she would have to realize sometime that younger women were going to take her place. He didn't want to do it because he knew it would nearly kill her. No one else would give her a job; at least not on the stage doing teasers and that was the only thing she could do. On the night he put the notice in her pay envelope, he watched her from the back of the house. It confirmed his decision. Her face and figure were still good, but she had lost the trick. In growing older she had grown more confident and proud until she didn't make any effort to put it over. She made the house feel like dirt. After the intermission he went downtown. He wasn't going to be around when she got the news. She was a strong woman, still handsome, and she'd put up a fight. So he went downtown to a movie.

That was on Saturday night. After the show there was a rehearsal. The two leading comedians knew that Beatrice was through and somehow the girls had found out about it. After they were paid they stood around the stage waiting for Cohen to call the rehearsal and waiting for Beatrice to climb the iron stairs that wound up from the dressing-rooms and make the noise everyone expected her to make. For once there was no jealousy. They were not only sorry; they were frightened. None of the girls liked Beatrice. She never got along with the other women and never called the girls by their names. They stood around waiting, with their coats over their costumes, their tarnished dancing shoes showing. They felt as if they were responsible for her middle age. As if they ought to apologize.

They heard her running up the iron treads as she always came up those stairs. She was dressed in street clothes and she looked nice. She was carrying a big leather purse under one arm. Instead of saying anything she walked right through the wings, right by the mail rack and out the door. From the window someone saw her hailing a cab. She looked as if she meant business. She might have something on Harcourt that would make him keep her. Cohen called the rehearsal and the girls lined up. A little after midnight Harcourt came back and went up to Cohen, who was standing by the piano.

"What did Beatrice do?" he asked.

"She didn't do anything. She just got into her street clothes and went out."

"Oh, God. That's worse," Harcourt said. "She probably thinks she can sue me. She probably thinks she has something on me. But she hasn't. She hasn't anything on me."

On Sunday the whole show moved up to Portland by bus and they opened with a matinee on Monday. All the time Harcourt kept expecting to hear from Beatrice, but nothing happened. He didn't believe she would take it quietly. Her place was being taken by a younger girl named Marie Badu. She was a dark French-Canadian with a long build and swarthy skin. The orchestra played muted, rapid music and after the first encore she raced around the stage giving them all of it before they knew what they were seeing.

It was in January and there was a heavy snow on the ground. The girls were complaining about the snow and the cold all the time. They couldn't seem to heat the theatre and the air in the dressing-rooms and on the stage was stale and cold. It was an old house that was only opened two or three times a season and it smelt of camphor and disinfectant. After the first two nights the audience fell off. The gallery was always full but across the foot-lights and through the smoke you could see blocks of empty seats on the floor and no one ever sat in the boxes.

Marie Badu was leaving the theatre after the last show on Wednesday. She was quiet and she took her work seriously and she didn't talk with the line girls. She was walking up the alley that led from the stage door to the street. The eaves of the theatre overhung the sidewalk and the melting snow from the roof had frozen again on the paving. She stepped carefully in her high-heeled shoes, but halfway down the walk she slipped. Her left foot went forward and she fell, bending her right leg backwards from the knee. Some of the girls, coming out a few minutes later, found her there by the wall.

"Oh, for God's sake," she said softly, when they stopped. "Oh, for God's sake, don't stand around

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like a lotta of saps, do something. I'm sorry," she added quickly, "but it hurts, it hurts. It hurts." One of the girls called a cab and they took her to a hospital. Her right leg was broken.

Harcourt didn't know what to do. They only had one other teaser in the show and one wasn't enough. It would take a girl a day and a night to come on from New York. There was no one in Boston but Beatrice. He didn't want to see her again. He was afraid to see her. He decided to try out one of the line girls. He took the prettiest one, a plump, fresh-looking blonde and rehearsed her all morning. She was anxious to get ahead and she was willing to do anything. But she couldn't seem to fall into it. She was slow and even shy. Harcourt stood in the back of the dark, dead theatre and shouted at her until he was hoarse.

"Give it to 'em. Shake it up. You're not here to embarrass them."

"Yes, Mr. Harcourt."

He put her on for the matinee, but when he went back to the office he wired Beatrice's hotel and called her to Portland.

They were buying tickets for the last show when she came into the office. She was wearing her black street clothes and she looked smart. Her face was pale and just enough bleached hair showed under her hat.

"What do you want?" she said.

"Now listen, Beatrice. I'm in a bad way. Sit down, sit down. Marie broke her leg on the ice in the alley and I'm short a girl. I want you to go on for me."

"You mean you want me to go on for the rest of the week?"

"That's it."

"Well, I'm not going to," she said quietly.

"Now listen, Beatrice. I'm in a bad way. With only one other girl we'll go so much in the red that it'll take us a month to pull out. I've done some bad things to you. I've done some good things. If you'll just do this for me."

"I'm not signing up for any three-day appearances. I'm not a substitute yet. The round trip up here cost six dollars. That's on you. Give me the money and I'll take the train back tonight."

"Now listen, Beatrice."

"If you want me to sign up for the rest of the season it's all right. But not for any three days. I know you think I'm through. You think I'm an old woman, don't you? Don't you? But I'm not. I can give it to them as well as any other girl on this circuit."

"How about a hundred dollars for the three days?"

"I tell you I'm not signing up for any three-day appearances whatever you pay me. Give me the six dollars. If you keep me here arguing I'll miss the train and it'll cost you a hotel bill."

Although Harcourt had pushed a chair toward her she was still standing.

"Well, suppose we call the three days a trial, then. You go on for three days and if they like you I'll keep you on for the rest of the season."

"If I make good I'll be on for the rest of the season?"

"Yes, you'll be on for the rest of the season."

She looked straight at him. Her eyes were clear and her features were firm and pleasant. She looked fifty-two, but she was still attractive. Her figure was mature and athletic. The black dress gave her dignity. She looked like a widow.

"I won't make you sign any papers," she said. "I'll take your word for it. If you'll show me where the dressing-rooms are I'll go on before the intermission."

When she went on Harcourt was standing in the wings watching her and so were all the girls. They knew that something like a trial was up. She came in from the right on slow music. She was wearing a white evening dress that trailed on the floor. Her bleached hair shone in the light. She came up to the footlights and sang her song and then, to slower music, began to walk idly, proudly around the stage, loosening the dress at her breasts. She had a quiet, wise smile on her face as if she knew everything in the world.

When she came off the indifferent applause sounded from backstage like someone spilling a pail of water. She went on again, under a pink light, her head lifted, the quiet, wise smile on her face. She knew her stuff and each exit was timed perfectly. On the third encore she had taken off everything but her skirt and she had this draped tightly around her body like a shawl. She came up to the footlights and dropped this onto the floor. The house was dead silent. A couple of men lighted cigarettes. Then she walked to the back of the stage and turned around. Harcourt was watching her all the time. The orchestra leader knew what she wanted and the drum began a brutal, monotonous beat. She lifted her arms, locked her hands at the back of her neck and began to buck.

It brought the house down. Harcourt had never heard a noise like that. From the wings it sounded like a heavy rain and thunder and above it you could hear them whistling from the gallery. He didn't know what she was doing until Cohen, who had been standing in the back of the house, came running up to him.

"God, she's wonderful," he said. He was laughing and breathing so heavily that he could hardly speak. "She's had someone paint a coupla red hands on her fanny. She's wonderful."

Instead of laughing with Cohen, Harcourt acted as if he hadn't heard, and walked away. He walked through the flats, out by the mail-rack, away from the clapping and the stamping. He walked out into the cold alley and stood there feeling as if he had sat beside her on all those desperate days and nights when she had sat in her hotel room, thinking it up, watching the traffic below her window.

JOHN CHEEVER.

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Washington Notes

Taking Mr. Roosevelt Apart—Diagnosis of the Second Term's Atmospheric Change—Electing a New Liberal Leadership

THESE Notes begin with a confession. Looking back over what he has written since Congress met last January, the writer feels bound to admit he has told a great deal less than the whole truth about Washington. This space each week has been largely devoted to the deviltries of those opposing Mr. Roosevelt's plan for the reorganization of the Supreme Court. The whole truth would have included something about the colossal mistakes made by Mr. Roosevelt himself.

The writer believes that liberals owe it to themselves to indulge in an interval of quiet brooding. Mr. Roosevelt was our leader, and the horrid fact is that under his banner we have just taken a dreadful walloping. We ought to try to find out how this happened. We ought to try to take Mr. Roosevelt apart and see what makes him tick.

Let us start back at the beginning. Last November, Mr. Roosevelt received a plurality of 11,069,699 or approximately 60 percent of the vote cast. He won 523 electoral votes out of a possible total of 531. It was the greatest single victory for liberalism the country has known, and in the ten months since the elections it has been largely frittered away. It has been frittered away in two separate, but interconnected, struggles—the struggle centering around the Supreme Court, and that centering around the CIO and the strikes called by it in the mass industries.

The effect of the Supreme Court fight has been to alienate the right-wing liberals. In Congress, a good-sized bloc of Senators and Representatives, elected as liberals, have been driven clean over into the camp of the reactionaries. Their feeling against Mr. Roosevelt is deep and bitter. We are not concerned here with whether the Supreme Court plan was intrinsically right or wrong. The fact is that it shattered last November's united front.

The repercussions of the CIO have been almost as disastrous. When, during the General Motors strike last January, Mr. Roosevelt publicly rebuked Mr. John L. Lewis, no great harm was done, perhaps. But Mr. Roosevelt's now-famous statement in the Little Steel strike: "A plague o' both your houses," grieved and shocked the left-wing liberals as thoroughly as the Supreme Court plan had earlier grieved and shocked their fellows of the right wing. Today many left-wing liberals distrust Mr. Roosevelt, and are quietly planning to desert him for a hypothetical farmer-labor party. Last November's vast liberal majority in Congress still exists, but it is leaderless and almost impotent.

For this disaster Mr. Roosevelt is to blame. In November his was the power and glory; today his are the brickbats. He had a magnificent opportunity, and he muffed it. He had the ball smack in the center of his glove, and he dropped it. But, in the writer's opinion, it is much easier to throw blame on Mr. Roosevelt than to put your finger on the exact spot where he went wrong. It is by no means sure that if Mr. Roosevelt had compromised with the Supreme Court oppositionists early in the session, or if he had called in Mr. Tom Girdler and Mr. Eugene Grace during the steel strike and forced them to negotiate with Mr. Lewis, everything else would have gone smoothly. No easy, slapdash criticism of Mr. Roosevelt is valid.

Mr. Roosevelt has been accused by both liberals and reactionaries of having the instincts of a dictator. There is a sense in which this charge is true. The Supreme Court plan was one of the most important measures ever to be placed before the country, and yet Mr. Roosevelt consulted no one about it except Mr. Homer S. Cummings and two Justice Department underlings. Possibly Mr. Roosevelt was justified in not forewarning the titular Democratic leaders of the Senate, Vice President Garner, the late Senator Joe T. Robinson and Senator Barkley. But Senator Norris, for example, is as wise and kindly an adviser as any President could ask for, and it is an open secret that Mr. Norris was dumbfounded by the form in which the Supreme Court bill was cast. If Mr. Roosevelt had taken Mr. Norris into his confidence beforehand, many of the disasters that later attended the plan might have been avoided. In submitting his Supreme Court plan, Mr. Roosevelt acted with an abruptness and seeming levity that we commonly associate with Hitler or Mussolini.

Much the same thing can be said about Mr. Roosevelt and the CIO. The CIO unions were Mr. Roosevelt's strongest allies in the November election, and the biggest contributors to his campaign fund. They were entitled to think that they had a working partnership with him. Yet last January, when Mr. Lewis told the General Motors strikers that the administration would stand behind them, Mr. Roosevelt promptly expressed annoyance. It happened that the writer was in Mr. Lewis' office in May, when the news came of Mr. Roosevelt's statement: "A plague o' both your houses." Mr. Lewis was seated on the edge of a desk. He said nothing, but his heels drummed against the desk's lower panels with a violence that just missed reducing them to splinters. Here, again, Mr. Roosevelt acted in the manner of a dictator. Both Hitler and Mussolini have abruptly rid themselves of devoted, but troublesome, supporters.

It is impossible to deny that Mr. Roosevelt functions badly with men who approach his own public stature. Although I cannot prove it, it is my belief that in 1933, at the height of the NRA madness, Mr. Roosevelt was jealous of General Hugh S. Johnson. I believe Mr. Roosevelt is now jealous of Mr. Lewis. In the Cabinet, Mr. Hull and Mr. Ickes are men with positive convictions of their own, and there has been repeated friction between them and Mr. Roosevelt. On the other hand, Secretary Morgenthau and Mr. Hopkins fairly worship Mr. Roosevelt, and all three get on like a basketful of kittens.

When all this is said, however, we still do not explain the present collapse of the liberal movement. A man of Mr. Roosevelt's temperament does not necessarily make a bad head of a democratic nation. Except for the ever shifting members of his brain trust, Mr. Roosevelt gave his full confidence to no one throughout his first term. He listened to many people, and then followed where his fancy led. The result was perhaps the most impressive body of social legislation ever enacted within a single administration.

The atmospheric change that has occurred since Mr. Roosevelt's first term seems to the writer a subtle affair. To

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all appearances, the mood of the country is unaltered. Mr. Roosevelt still has a majority of the voters behind him. But with the return of prosperity, the cohesiveness and belligerence of minorities have seemingly increased. In my opinion, neither Mr. Roosevelt nor the liberals in Congress have yet set themselves to consider what the legitimate rights of these minorities are, and to what extent these minorities need be conciliated.

This problem is the chief factor in the present misfortunes of liberalism. Instinctively professional politicians—and most members of Congress are politicians before they are liberals—shrink from offending minorities. Mr. Roosevelt seems to have no such feeling. In the Supreme Court fight, there was a minority of the Right that believed, perhaps insincerely, that the Supreme Court plan was a bad thing. From the beginning, the Roosevelt men in Congress wanted to conciliate this minority. What they were after was not a bald compromise, achieved through hard bargaining, but the more delicate objective of renewed group unity. Mr. Roosevelt turned a deaf ear. The Jefferson Island picnic was a three-day farce, acted in the worst possible taste. The result was that what started out as a crusade turned into a shambles.

This same problem of minorities was presented by the CIO. Here the minority was on the Left, for I think the President's defenders tell the truth when they say the country, as a whole, was opposed to the sit-down strikes. Nevertheless, a handful of Senators, and a substantial number of Representatives, owe their seats to organized labor. They believe passionately in the importance of the CIO. Last month the executive committee of the United Mine Workers met in Washington, and passed resolutions hostile to the administration. On the same day, Mr. Roosevelt's aides frantically telephoned these pro-CIO Congressmen, demanding that they deliver speeches in Congress attacking Mr. Lewis. None of them did, of course. It seems to me that this was a gesture of almost criminal obtuseness. It will be a long time before the pro-CIO Congressmen forgive Mr. Roosevelt for it.

No one can say that it is Mr. Roosevelt's business to hold together, at whatever cost, all the disparate groups that went to the polls to vote for him last November. In the early part of the last century, under Jefferson and Jackson, the common people won thundering electoral victories. If you will reread the history of those two administrations, you will see how, by repeated compromises, the bright hope of those victories was largely betrayed. Today, under Mr. Roosevelt, the minorities of the Right are unquestionably stronger and more vocal than the minorities of the Left. A program of simple compromise might easily carry the liberal movement to complete stultification.

The plain fact is that some compromises are well worth making, while others are mortally dangerous. Liberals will always need to balance the evils of alienating a minority of their members against the evils of whittling away the principle of a legislative measure. It will always be a matter of conscience and judgment, to be decided by the circumstances of each particular case. This is the basic job of political leadership, and, in my opinion, Mr. Roosevelt botched it at the last session. He broke the unity of the liberal movement, and he simultaneously lost his legislative program. He ought to have saved one or the other. No one could have done worse. His legislative tactics during the last ten months ought to be remembered as a horrible example of what not to do.

For the future, the first task of liberals is to see Mr. Roosevelt as he actually is. Ever since the 1933 election, he has been touted as the greatest politician ever to be placed within a human skin. This department has never accepted that estimate of Mr. Roosevelt, and has said so on many occasions. He is a great political candidate, which is something quite different from a politician. Because of his remarkable ability to inspire quick friendliness from the mass of voters, he is an asset of pure gold to the liberal movement. But, by temperament, he is unfitted to direct the liberal group in Congress, and control of this group ought to be removed from his hands.

The liberals in Congress, from now on, need to find their leadership from within their own ranks. There is no other place from which it can be created. It must be admitted that this will necessitate a great stiffening of liberal vertebrae. While it is true Mr. Roosevelt, at the last session, led the congressional liberals down a steep place into the sea, it is also true they followed him in faithful porcine fashion. The writer knows of at least four attempts that were made by House liberals to form some sort of independent leadership of their own. In each case, their expressed objective was to save Mr. Roosevelt from himself. All four attempts were abortive, partly because the liberal leaders shook at the knees at the prospect of having to appear before Mr. Roosevelt, and speak up to him like little men. In the Senate, Messrs. Schwellenbach and Minton organized the Young Turks, but they did not do so until nearly July, and there is no evidence that they ever demanded that Mr. Roosevelt share his leadership with them. At the next session of Congress, whether this fall or next January, the liberals must do exactly this. During his first term, Mr. Roosevelt was an adequate leader of the liberal movement, but today a far more difficult situation exists, and it is a question whether or not the liberal movement is to be wrecked by Mr. Roosevelt's whimsicalities. A permanent, democratically chosen liberal leadership needs to be created in both Senate and House. In the Senate, it will probably need to be apart from the official Democratic leadership; in the House, the liberal and Democratic leadership might conceivably be combined, particularly if the Democratic caucus could be reëstablished as an instrument of popular control. Whoever are chosen as liberal spokesmen for the Senate and House—it is perhaps too early to suggest names—must then go to Mr. Roosevelt and insist that he admit them to bona-fide partnership.

If this can be done, the greatest obstacle in the way of the liberal movement will be surmounted. This department has no fears that a steering committee of Senate and House liberals would be timid, half-hearted or slack. As has been said here repeatedly, the group of liberals now in Congress is extraordinarily able, and its collective book-learning would put a university faculty to shame. They will have no easy task; they will have to make hair-line decisions in accepting compromises and rejecting them. But I for one am ready to believe they can save an immense treasure from the wreckage of Mr. Roosevelt's second term.

Washington. T. R. B.

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Other People's Money

Mr. Gay's Sad Lament—False Assumptions on Which the Stock Exchange Is Run —Suggestions for the SEC

THE PRESIDENT of the Stock Exchange has just uttered a piercing wail of rage and grief at the destruction of what he calls "liquidity" in the securities market by the Securities and Exchange Commission. The president, Mr. Gay, is a very estimable person. But he cannot help thinking under the dominion of those interests which are part of his economic life. And as a result he makes a collection of statements that are no better than might have come from his predecessor, Mr. Richard Whitney.

Mr. Gay's lament is based, as is so much of the economic philosophy of the Exchange, on a series of assumptions. For instance, he assumes that liquidity in the stock market is a good thing. Of course it is a good thing for stock brokers. They would starve to death if liquidity were wholly extinguished. But it does not follow that it is also a good thing for society. And the strange thing is that no one has ever offered one scintilla of evidence that liquidity is a good thing. I have searched the literature of speculation without being able to find a solitary paragraph in support of this thesis. It is an utterly unsupported statement which stock brokers and their hired economists have uttered over and over again for years.

By liquidity Mr. Gay means, in effect, a market filled with buyers and sellers—investors and speculators—so that a man may buy stocks today and unload them tomorrow; so that an owner of a share of stock may, on the instant when the wish is formed, pick up the telephone and sell the share on the Exchange with practically no delay.

First of all, Mr. Gay ignores the rather pertinent fact that a share of stock is a deed of ownership to part of a corporation controlling vast properties, often properties of a quasi-public interest. And of course he puts aside the obvious fact that this ownership of property which confers upon the stockholder those rights he defends with such religious zeal, also imposes upon him certain duties. The duties of ownership are something one seldom hears discussed in Wall Street and its purlieus. And of course it is this very liquidity of securities—the ease with which ownership may be assumed and put off—which has completely destroyed the last vestige of consciousness of ownership-duty in American stockholders. The evils which have flowed from that are so many that they may well be charged with a major share of the abuses under which the corporate system is now disintegrating.

But aside from this, Mr. Gay assumes that unless his Exchange is well stocked with speculators, providing a ready and continuous market for shares, then American business will not be financed. This, in turn, assumes that American industry is financed by the sale of shares of stock. This is another statement uttered frequently and generally believed which I have challenged before and which remains utterly unsupported.

What Mr. Gay is really talking about is his floor traders. And this is a matter of the first concern. For a number of years now I have been trying, but most ineffectually, to force upon the consciousness of the investor and his guardians that the heart of the whole Stock Exchange problem lies in this gentleman—the floor trader. And I would classify the specialist as nothing more than a floor trader armed with an especially dangerous instrument. The profits of the Stock Exchange membership are made in their own floor-trading. And always the Exchange has been dominated by the floor traders and their brethren—the specialists. They make its ethics, its philosophy, its rules. The business of commission broker is merely an adjunct of the Exchange's processes, essential as a means of bringing into the market the suckers who pay its bills and whose unguarded funds provide the traders with their profits.

There is no time to go into that subject here. But I do want to offer this suggestion to the Securities and Exchange Commission. James Landis is now out of the Commission. That ought to offer now an opportunity for doing the most urgent work of the Commission, which is to study such fundamental subjects of the markets as liquidity, the part played by stock selling in financing industry and the share of the floor trader in this process, along with a lot of other matters which rest now wholly on the self-preserving assumptions of stock brokers.

I believe that if a full, exhaustive study of this were made it would reveal the following facts and principles:

First, that stock trading on the Exchange plays no part whatever in the financing of new industries and no important part in the financing of old ones.

Second, that the operations of the professional floor traders, instead of introducing stability, actually introduce instability into the market.

Third, that the floor trader has dominated the Exchange and still does.

Fourth, that the profits of the stock-brokerage business, save in a few exceptional firms, are made out of the Stock Exchange members' own speculations and that this is an intolerable situation and poisons the ethics and standards and processes of the market.

Fifth, that the Stock Exchange is a self-governing institution under the supervision of the government. But it rules not merely itself but the market place, which comprehends the interests of stockholders, corporations, banks, investors and the public interest. This being so, one thing ought to be clear, that whether floor traders and specialists are driven from the Exchange or not, they ought not be permitted to take any part in the government of the market.

William Randolph Hearst has filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission an application for registry of a large issue of bonds. Brave criticisms of the issue have been filed. That story has been told. What has not been told is that Mr. Hearst enjoyed the advice of Mr. Joseph Kennedy and, I believe, another former employee of the SEC in preparing his application. Mr. Kennedy was once chairman of the Commission. It is pretty well filled with his appointees. He is now in Washington and the SEC is considering that application. In view of the fact that the President has a son employed by Mr. Hearst and a son-in-law running one of Mr. Hearst's newspapers and that the President's former SEC chairman is advising Mr. Hearst on his SEC problems, it is apparent that Mr. Hearst believes there is nothing like having some friends at court. A good many people are watching this performance and wondering what will happen.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

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The Bandwagon

Question: Will the fact that some of the defendants come from outside the state of Maine affect your verdict?

Answer: Yes.

Q.: Will the fact that the defendants are connected with the CIO affect your verdict?

A.: Yes.

Q.: Do you know what CIO means?

A. No.—*From an account in The Lewiston (Me.) Sun of the examination of prospective jurors in the recent trial growing out of the strike among shoe workers.*

Five physicians . . . came to attend Mrs. Charles Tharp, but they told the father the Iowa law provides that no child shall be born in a vehicle.

So the physicians assisted Tharp in hoisting the trailer on logs, leaving its wheels dangling.—*Associated Press dispatch from Des Moines, Iowa.*

Up-the-Rebels Department

Some women are so fastidious that they even "dress" their flowers. . . . In New York City recently a lady spent $2,000 to have some white chrysanthemums tinted a certain pink to match the icing on her wedding cake.—*From an article in Collier's Weekly.*

Others whose names might be expected to appear in the list of holiday-makers have more serious matters to attend to. The other day someone asked Sir "Jock" Buchanan-Jardine if he was going away. "Away, now?" he said, "with hounds to look after and cub-hunting coming on?"—*From The Evening Standard (London), quoted in The New Statesman.*

What Goes on There?

Chinese schoolgirls must wear hats in future, says a decree issued by the Nanking Government in response to a petition submitted by the wife of Wang Ching-wei, veteran Kuomintang leader.

Mrs. Wang urged that, according to the Chinese code of propriety, it is indecent for young women to go bare-headed in the street. . . . At present hats are scarcely ever worn by Chinese women.—*News item in The Japan Advertiser (Tokyo).*

Same Over at Our House

Only patriots of our fatherland and people loyal to communism can work on any of our newspapers in any position, from copy-reader to editor. Only party and non-party Bolsheviki are worthy of working in and guiding the press of the freest and most democratic country in the world—the Soviet Union.—*From a statement in Pravda (Moscow) quoted in a dispatch to The New York Times.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic.—The Editors.

CORRESPONDENCE

Movies and Fascism

SIR: Edmund Wilson's remarks on Mr. Goldwyn seemed to me, when I read them several weeks ago, extremely well taken. Mr. Ferguson at once let it be known, in his peculiar kind of Saroyanesque automatic writing, that *he* at least proposes to continue to act as Hollywood's unpaid (I hope) press agent, regardless of what Mr. Wilson thinks. And several correspondents have attacked Mr. Wilson with really extraordinary violence. I hope it is not too late to say a word on the other side.

At one time I was intensely interested in the movies. I wrote a good many articles on the movies for various now defunct magazines, I helped found the Film Society, and I spent much too much time in movie theatres. The degeneration of our films in the last ten years is depressing, and I agree with Mr. Wilson in placing the blame on the commercial gentlemen who control Hollywood.

I was puzzled by the line of attack chosen by Mr. Wilson's critics. They agreed with him that Hollywood movies stink, BUT, they say, they stink because they are made for the masses and the masses *like* stinking movies and Mr. Wilson is a snob and an enemy of freedom if he wants to deprive the masses of their lousy movies. This would seem to reveal a fascist cynicism as to the masses. Why are these liberals so ready to agree with the cynical captains of the movie industry that the movies are bad because the masses insist on cheap and shoddy entertainment? Why are they so sure that Mr. Goldwyn and Mr. Zukor and the rest of their kind don't make lousy pictures because their own taste is for lousy pictures? I have never been able to find a satisfactory correlation between lousiness and popularity in the movies. Many perfectly terrible films have somehow failed to make money, and some extremely good ones (I mention at random "The Birth of a Nation," the films of Chaplin and Walt Disney, Von Sternberg's "Underworld," LeRoy's "Little Caesar") have been enormously successful. People flock to bad movies because they get no chance to flock to anything else. To imply, as Mr. Wilson's critics do, that the masses are on the same cultural level as Mr. Goldwyn is to insult the American people. If Hollywood is an accurate index of our civilization, then fascism is too good for us.

Brookfield Center, Conn. DWIGHT MACDONALD.

Does Business Need New Capital?

SIR: In his department of August 11, subtitled "Postponing the Collapse," John T. Flynn characterizes the record of private investment as reflected in new security financing as "appalling."

In bewailing the small amount of private funds which are flowing into new security issues, Mr. Flynn, I believe, voices an important prevalent fallacy.

Actually, is not one of the brightest spots in the business and financial picture the fact that the present high rate of business activity has been achieved without the artificial impetus derived from reckless security financing, which in the past has customarily resulted in uneconomic overexpansion by plant and capital-goods industries; and is it not fortunate that the investment market is now free of an uncalled-for surplus of new securities?

In other words, the present healthy "technical position" in private-security financing is in happy contrast to the 1927-29 situation when the New Era's frenzied outpouring of securities caused tremendous general business and financial overexpansion which subsequently wrecked our entire economic structure.

Hence, although I cannot prognosticate the future, I beg to submit that the existing restriction of new-issue production to real demand properly belongs on the credit rather than on the debit side of our existing financial balance sheet.

Chicago, Ill. A. WILFRED MAY.

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Herald Tribune Accepts Dictator

SIR: Hello! What's this, what's this? Says The New York Herald Tribune (conservative Rep.) August 20, 1937, on the editorial page: "Free America gets a dictator, and the sun rises as usual . . . the country . . . recognized in . . . the appointment . . . as dictator indications of a new deal in the handling of domestic affairs. And the country bows to this new dictatorship with marked unanimity."

But, according to the headline, the advent and popular acceptance of the dictatorship was chronicled "Twenty Years Ago Today in The New York Tribune," when, as the full context explains:

> Free America gets a dictator and the sun rises as usual. Surfeited with war sensations, the country nevertheless recognized, in the passage of the food-control bill and the appointment of HERBERT C. HOOVER as dictator, indications of a new deal in the handling of domestic affairs, and the country bows to this new dictatorship with marked unanimity.

New York City. ROBERT HAMMOND MURRAY.

Pep Talk

SIR: Your readers may be interested in the document quoted in part below. It is an order to the commanders of all the "volunteer" Italian troops in Spain, signed by the Divisional Commanding Officer, General Mancini, and countersigned by the Chief of Staff, Major Ferraris. This document was placed on file with the League of Nations by the Spanish government.

New York City. W. P. MANGOLD.

[ENCLOSURE]

(a) Various circumstances of which you are cognizant have shown that although the units are composed of troops with a high morale, ready to obey orders, etc., they often lack "fury," aggressiveness, and let themselves be impressed relatively easily by the incidents of the battle.

This state of things, which is already sufficiently regrettable, might become a real danger if in addition there were a tendency to overvalue the enemy, especially in the sense of crediting him with being able to do easily things that we should consider it impossible for our part even to order.

(b) The Commanders to whom I am addressing this should react urgently, energetically and constantly against such faults and such a mentality.

They should be continually in touch with their units and should see to it that their immediate subordinates do the same (I know very well who does it and who does not).

They should persuade by *exaltation,* that is to say, they should explain carefully to their subordinates that our troops have in the last few days gained a most important tactical success by repeatedly pushing back in prohibitive atmospheric conditions a number of the lines of trenches of the enemy; that they have beaten and taken the positions of some of the best Red troops—the internationals; that they have beaten back various attacks by the latter; that we have stopped only in order to allow the most fatigued troops the rest they have earned, etc., etc.

(c) Explain to them carefully the conditions in which the enemy finds himself (being virtually abandoned even by Russia and strangled by the blockade), that his moral and material situation is the worst possible and that his resistance is that which precedes collapse.

Tell them that the "international brigades," although composed of better fighters than the ordinary Spanish militiamen, are few in number, and that when they came to fight us their number had been already diminished by their losses. . . . Moreover, these men are the very same—or they are the brothers, to put it that way—of those whom our Fascist squads resoundingly flogged on the roads of Italy. . . .

(d) It is necessary to explain to the men, who have much common sense and will understand the fact, that when we suffer under the rain the enemy is not lodged in any "grand hotel" but that he finds himself in the same conditions; if sometimes (an inevitable annoyance in war) victuals are late or do not arrive, the enemy is not lunching in a restaurant, but on the contrary is suffering more than we from hunger (taking account of his very inferior resources and of the fact that all the Red districts are short of food), etc.

Explain the reasons why in the first days—when the weather was worst—the Red aviation was able to fly and ours was not. . . .

(e) The Commanders by elemental and simple argument should make clear to their subordinates (and sometimes to themselves) how absurd it is to attribute fantastic possibilities to the enemy. . . .

Here, on foreign soil, we are (at the side and under near observation of our allies and under the distant but vigilant observation of the whole world) the representatives of armed Italy and of fascism. By our actions will be judged the quality and efficiency —moral and ethical—of Italy of the year XV. . . .

From The New Republic Mailbag

Commenting on George Soule's article, "Psychology and Revolution," in our issue of August 25, Andrew Scheld, of New York City, says that many liberals are repelled by advocates of radical causes who appear to be not so much crusaders for a better world as neurotics working out individual compulsions. He recommends: "That all public-appearing representatives should speak a reasonably good English . . . that they should dress conservatively, neither too somber nor too garish, and that they should not be overbearingly intellectual."

Rita Waxman, in her capacity as secretary, calls attention to the work of the American Friends of the Mexican People, 52 West Eighth Street, New York City, and says the organization is planning an extensive program of forums, lectures, art exhibits and a fiesta for the coming fall and winter season.

Boris Anatov, of Cincinnati, Ohio, chides Fred Berensmeier, whose letter was published in our issue of August 25, for sending a copy of Thomas Wolfe's "I Have a Thing to Tell You" to a friend in Germany. Anatov says that under the Nazi censorship such action is just like sending a friend a stick of dynamite.

Jane Speed describes the plans for establishing in Birmingham, Alabama, a retail outlet for books and periodicals of interest to radicals and progressives. It is to be opened at 1907 Fifth Avenue, North, under the name of Jane Speed's Book Store.

The Scottsboro Defense Committee disavows any connection with the current theatrical appearances of the boys who were released and says it joined attorney Samuel Leibowitz in urging the boys to refrain from such activities. The Scottsboro Defense Committee, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City, is preparing appeals and actively working to free the remaining defendants and welcomes contributions to aid in this work.

Daniel Tracy, 839 Garden Street, Hoboken, New Jersey, suggests the return of her former colonies to Germany as a realistic step toward world peace. . . . Adrian Waldo Sasha, P. O. Box 117, Oakland, California, is organizing a National Public Press Bureau to work for the establishment of publicly owned newspapers throughout the United States.

What's on the Air?

William E. Dodd, United States Ambassador to Germany, discusses "Public Opinion in a Democracy" at the Williamstown Institute of Human Relations. Friday, September 3, 6:45 P.M., CBS.

On Labor Day, Monday, September 6, the National Broadcasting Company's Blue Network carries addresses by the heads of both the CIO and the A.F. of L. John L. Lewis is heard from 2:30 to 3 P.M., and William Green speaks from 4:15 to 4:45 P.M.

W. I. Meyers, Governor of the Farm Credit Administration, discusses the present status of rural credit. Tuesday, September 7, 7:45 to 8 P.M., NBC-Red Network.

Vaino Tanner, Minister of Finance in Finland, and Howard A. Cowden, vice-president of the Coöperative League of the United States, broadcast from Paris the news of the convention of the World Coöperative Alliance in that city. Wednesday, September 8, 6:15 to 6:30, CBS.

The drama roster for the week includes John Barrymore and his wife Elaine Barrie in a radio version of Philip Barry's play, "The Animal Kingdom." Monday, September 6, 9:30 to 10:30 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

All times given are Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Harper Prize Novel

IN SOME respects Frederic Prokosch's second novel[1] reads like a grim imitation of his first. "The Asiatics" described the wanderings of some nebulous Westerners over the Near and Far East—it was a stilted, highly colored, romantic sort of book, filled with narrow escapes from dangers that seemed to be both pressing and obscure, and with graphic descriptions of landscapes that seemed artificial no matter how graphically they were described. But with all this it was also lively and high-spirited; the same dopey characters kept turning up in a papier-maché Persia, Afghanistan and India, carrying on imperturbably in one romantic city the conversation they had inexplicably dropped several thousand miles back, until the Asia of Mr. Prokosch's imagination began to seem like a small town, where everybody was constantly running into everybody else. The book also had a kind of pipe-dream reality: if you never quite knew who the characters were, where they were going, or why they landed in jail, nevertheless their journeys and stretches in jail were communicated by realistic descriptions of such squalor, hunger and vice as seldom appear in fantasy, and the abrupt, unreal conversations were made timely by discussions of the Soviet Union, revolution and Far Eastern politics.

"The Seven Who Fled" has all the characteristics of "The Asiatics" except its humor. It is divided into seven sections, each dealing with one member of a group of Europeans who are expelled from the province of Sinkiang through obscure Soviet machinations, and who follow their national and racial fates to fitting ends. Between its lines, as with "The Asiatics," you glimpse an elaborately worked-out parable: these are people fleeing the death of Europe and perishing among the Eastern hordes, dramatizing the decline of the West, their individual fates symbolizing the fates of their different countries and their common fate symbolizing the fate of the Europe they have abandoned. Indeed, despite several excellent sections of pure narrative, much of "The Seven Who Fled" turns into an essay, half-analytical and half-impressionistic, on national characteristics. Layeville, the English explorer, ascetic and aloof, leaves the fugitives and dies in the mountains dreaming of England; Serafimov, the huge, blundering Russian exile, plunges into the collective squalor of an inn in the drug-marketing city of Aqsu, and commits a Dostoevskian murder to the accompaniment of mystical thoughts; de la Scaze, a wealthy, fastidious French writer, is abandoned in his illness and dies while pursuing a native girl during a plague; his Spanish wife, indolent and beautiful as Spanish women seem always to be in fiction, lets herself be sold as a prostitute in Shanghai, too passive to struggle; a hard, fanatical German fascist escapes after fantastic difficulties only to wind up as exhausted and will-less as the rest.

Although the seven are in a way stock national types—the Englishman high-minded, the Spanish woman sensuous, the Russian mystical, the Frenchman concrete and exact, conscious in his last days of his money running out and of each curve of his native girl—there is a lot of imagination and warmth in their individual portraits. Each section includes a passage in which the central character recalls his past; and these nostalgic interludes, by far the most successful part of the novel, suggest both the strength and weakness of Prokosch's writing. Love, for the Englishman, is all mixed up with recollections of Elizabethan literature, untroubled confusions about which sex is which, Cambridge, tennis, cricket, tea, relatives and the English landscape; for the Russian it is involved with memories of climbing through windows into bedrooms, long happy silences sitting beside the bed, and sudden disappearances; for the Austrian it is mixed up with memories of fresh-baked bread, lots of good food and childlike songs; for the Frenchman it is as vivid as if it had happened yesterday, involving memories of Stendhal and de Laclos and a grown-up girl who came to visit his aunt. As you read these passages, rhetorical and high-flown as many of them are, you realize that they are not descriptions of people, but impressions, distilled from thousands of novels and poems, of the cultures of the countries involved; and they yield the same sort of pleasure that you might get from reading good impressionistic literary criticism. And at his best you feel that Frederic Prokosch has actually organized something that nobody has pulled together before—at his best he succeeds in projecting his Europeans against an Asiatic background and in making you see Europe and its culture in perspective against the masses and the culture of the East. That the Europeans for the most part emerge as distracted and silly, eaten up with their crazy rivalries, egoistic, doomed, hopelessly outnumbered and incapable of understanding that they are outnumbered is, of course, the central theme of the novel.

Perhaps because this global vision does get across in part, the pretentious posturing that fills "The Seven Who Fled" seems all the more exasperating and affected. Forever standing on high peaks looking across limitless deserts, vast lakes and distant mountains, the characters indulge in grandiose, mock-Byronic speculations that are just as resonant and high-sounding as they are empty—"For whatever you do that is noble, you must suffer," Layeville reflects, as he is dying, "for whatever joy you pluck out of darkness, you must pay." "We need illusion," de la Scaze writes before his death, "as we need bread; without it we die." Layeville comes upon a dying lama, who whispers to him the secrets of Oriental religion; Serafimov finds an old Dane who howls that civilization is just a matter of inventing new and horrible toys for humanity's boredom; the German is befriended by a hermit who tells him that Europeans are in love with death. The trouble is that the words of wisdom do not tell you much; the lamas, porters, fugitive harlots and thieves all seem to have been reading Spengler and Eliot, to be remarkably conscious of history in a broad sense and remarkably naïve about how contemporary politics actually work. Mr. Prokosch has far too sharp an awareness of the modern world to let his characters become bodiless abstractions existing in political vacuity; he puts them in offices, in theatres of action, and shows them pushed around by the conflicts of world powers. But it seems that all they get out of this is an ability to sound off in ponderously mushy sophomoric platitudes. What can you make of an exile, living at the very center of Far Eastern politics, who mutters, "You'd shudder if I told you about the spies"—and follows it up with a discussion of Good and Evil? In such passages you can see where Mr. Prokosch's sense of contemporary reality fails him; it is as if some hardened veteran of the American labor movement were shown

[1] The Seven Who Fled, by Frederic Prokosch. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

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observing that the CIO and the A.F. of L. do not seem to be getting along. The truth is that you can believe in Mr. Prokosch's Europeans as long as they are struggling against a situation that they do not understand, running away, getting sick, and perishing under the impact of Oriental indifference. But when they observe, "There's evil brewing in these places," you can only conclude that when Mr. Prokosch's imagination lets him down, he falls hard. And by the time you have finished "The Seven Who Fled" you are undecided as to whether the harsh Asiatic winter or the native mystics and philosophers were the greater hardship of the flight.

ROBERT CANTWELL.

Life and Death

The Life and Death of a Spanish Town, by Elliot Paul. New York: Random House. 427 pages. $2.50.

BRIEFLY, the facts are these: there is, or was, a town called Santa Eulalia on the island of Iviza, which is the westernmost of the Balearic Islands, in the crook of the Spanish Mediterranean. A town of four thousand-odd inhabitants, mostly fishermen and their families, and with a history dating back to Phoenician times, it had a few dozen houses grouped around a central plaza; two hotels, three bars, a couple of bake-shops, a butcher shop, a blacksmith, a carpenter, various stores. It had a way of life, developed out of communal needs and shaped by historic pressures; and this life had fallen into so settled a mold that its hourly activities moved with predictable regularity, and the days and even the years fitted into a kind of ritualistic calendar, stretching peacefully back through the centuries and, supposedly, promising the same peaceful progression on into the future.

There were a few links with the affairs of the mainland and of the world. A small-town banker, who owned the Iviza-Barcelona steamer and held mortgages here and there, represented finance. Three rich industrialists owned summer estates outside the town. There were the Church, in the person of a squad of priests; Authority, vested in a detachment of the Guardia Civil. There were two or three avowed Communists, a half-dozen or a dozen Fascists—unavowed, since the elections of 1935, but secretly active. But apart from these almost invisible threads that linked it with a larger pattern, the town's life seemed complete in itself, and the majority of the populace held no beliefs that were not conditioned by their immediate concerns.

Until, that is to say, July 14, 1936, when the Sanjurjo-Franco coup d'état was attempted—and Sanjurjo was killed and the coup d'état failed. And Franco was left in command of the scattered dissidents, and German and Italian planes, bombs, guns, ammunition and finally troops were rushed in to sustain his forces, and the war that still splits Spain in half began. Then the threads that had seemed so inconsequential began to assume a dominant importance in the web of local affairs, pulling it into tragic conformations.

There was a wave of Fascist dominance, in the form of a period of martial law imposed by the garrison commander; a lull in the terror when Loyalist gunboats and militia appeared from Barcelona, taking over the island; followed, as the fighting grew fiercer on the mainland, by the withdrawal of the Loyalist forces, leaving the island open to Fascist invasion again. And in the midst of this, the townspeople, yanked suddenly awake to modern conflicts, doused in reaction, raised gasping to freedom, then left facing the next wave, advancing. . . .

There must have been hundreds of similar towns that lay in the path of the Fascist forces in Spain. Estepona, on the way to Malaga; Trujillo, Navalcarnero, Talavera de la Reina, Guernica. . . . The difference is that in Santa Eulalia, at the time hostilities began, Elliot Paul happened to be living. What he was doing there is not stated. But the island life is, or was, attractive to artists; and Mr. Paul is an artist, and a conscious and intelligent one, as the whole course of his writing, from Transition days onward, shows. It may be assumed, then, that he was working on another novel. But whatever it was, he put it aside in the crisis, and busied himself so actively on the Loyalist side that his own escape just before the second Fascist occupation must have been literally an escape from death—and, escaping, he wrote an account of the episode that he calls, only too precisely, "The Life and Death of a Spanish Town." Since Mr. Paul is also a man with sound training as a reporter, the book offers a unique factual insight into what must have occurred and still be occurring in those other towns in Spain, now swallowed by the Rebel advance.

There must have been hundreds of men like Guillermo, the blacksmith, in all the other towns in Spain, or like Mateo Rosa and Toniet Pardal the fishermen—brawny, jovial fellows who couldn't help despising the slinking ways of Fascist sympathizers like Francisco Ribas, and showing it. Hundreds of women like Eulalia Noguera and Anna Cosmi, men like Miguel Tor and Toni Ferrer and most of the two-score or more other characters mentioned in the book, who knew nothing of politics and less of philosophy—but who, when confronted with fascism, knew only instinctively that they hated it. And showed it. There must have been hundreds of Francisco Ribas too, to remember all this and take vengeance, and one can only estimate the thousands of lives such vengeance must have cost. Badajoz we know of, and Guernica, but of Santa Eulalia since Elliot Paul left it last September, and the other towns like it, there has been no news.

Mr. Paul's book is designedly not a political treatise, but there are times when one might have wished for a solider basis of opinion through it all. Occasionally, his attitude toward the situation seems hardly more reasoned than that of his townsmen was, and his view throughout is colored a little too patently by his own sentimental regret for the ease and backward simplicity of the place as it was. "You knew," he says at one point, in a kind of invocation to one of the older men of the village, "that politics had the odor of death and you wished every day that your neighbors would simply go on with their meals and their dominoes"—quite forgetting, seemingly, that politically it was the town's very naïveté that laid it helpless before the Fascists. It had been living in and on the past, and while this does not mitigate the tragedy of its abrupt confrontation with the present, it explains it in ways that the author does not indicate.

But then, Mr. Paul had lived in the town too long and had come to know its people too well for cold analysis, and it is the intimacy of his knowledge of them, and his sympathy, that gives the book its poignance and vivid human power. The reader, if he wishes, can make his own analysis of the picture it presents. One conclusion that must surely emerge is the peculiar sullenness, the unrelentingness of the Fascist mentality. The book itself makes this clear in a dozen ways; and indeed it would seem that fascism, wherever encountered, repays kindness with cruelty, tolerance with treachery. One wishes that a message could somehow be gotten to the Loyalists in Spain, to all anti-Fascists everywhere: "Be more merciful than they but just as unrelenting."

ROBERT M. COATES.

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Just Good Business

Coöperative Enterprise, by Jacob Baker. New York: The Vanguard Press. 282 pages. $2.

AMERICANS who are a little weary of the stereotyped success stories of consumer coöperatives, but would still like to familiarize themselves with their practical operation, will find a competent and readable survey in Jacob Baker's "Coöperative Enterprise."

Mr. Baker headed President Roosevelt's inquiry into coöperative enterprise which spent two and a half months last summer visiting ten European countries. This book is substantially a summary of the voluminous report recently submitted to the President by the six members of the committee, although the expressions of personal opinion come directly from the author's own section of the report. It is written simply and tersely, with a combination of restraint and persuasiveness that is often sadly lacking in other works on the subject.

Although Mr. Baker has written primarily for the uninitiated, many of his observations are penetrating enough to stimulate even the sophisticated. Considerable attention is devoted to the problem of accounting for the astounding progress of coöperatives in Europe as compared with their relatively sluggish development here. The European cooperatives took root amid the waste and inefficiency of a distributive system ill adapted to modern needs. The demand for coöperative goods was steady, and the turnover regular. Working capital was easily obtainable from members at low interest charges. Efficient management was acquired at moderate salaries. The result was an ability to operate at a cost level much lower than that of their competitors. To meet this challenge, private business had to increase efficiency, improve the quality of goods and lower prices.

The situation in America is by no means similar. We may rightly complain of inefficiency in distribution. But in the face of huge department stores, mail-order houses, chain stores and alert independent retailers, slow-starting cooperatives find it difficult to make their presence felt.

But this, to Mr. Baker, is no reason to exclude coöperatives from the American scene. It means only that they have a different function here. Already, farmers' marketing cooperatives have progressed to the stage where even veteran European coöperatives regard them with awe. Mr. Baker sees a further expansion of them in the future. Then there is the "general purpose" type of coöperative—a sort of hybrid producer-consumer general store—which Mr. Baker finds particularly adapted to some of the Southern mountain regions. As far as the orthodox consumer coöperatives are concerned, it is suggested that they concentrate on oil and gas, milk distribution and services such as health, hospitalization, funeral and laundry. There is also the suggestion of national or regional department stores and mail-order organizations along the lines recently started by Filene. And, finally, Mr. Baker sees a wide field for rural-electrification coöperatives, coöperative housing, genuine cooperative insurance and credit unions.

Recognizing how slowly coöperatives emerge from infancy, Mr. Baker suggests that until they have funds of their own to cover their capital requirements they may properly ask both federal and state governments to take whatever steps are necessary to see that coöperatives have credit on a parity with all other enterprises.

The tenor of Mr. Baker's approach is that coöperatives are "just good business." He sees no reason why this type of enterprise cannot exist side by side with governmental and private business. From one point of view this is all to the good. The middle class is often an important element in coöperative growth and can best be attracted by this attitude. However, as the author himself often points out, the backbone of coöperatives in Europe is the working class. One of the reasons for their slow development in America has been their inability to attract recruits from the ranks of labor. Mr. Baker has spoken of the value of coöperatives to labor, but with insufficient emphasis. Perhaps industrial strain and rising prices will supplement his remarks more vividly.

HERBERT A. FIERST.

Under Hitler

The Third Reich, by Henri Lichtenberger. Translated by Koppel S. Pinson, with a Preface by N. M. Butler. New York: The Greystone Press. 392 pages. $3.

The Fascist: His State and His Mind, by E. B. Ashton. New York: William Morrow and Company. 355 pages. $2.50.

MR. LICHTENBERGER is the Sorbonne authority on German literature who became famous for his Faust interpretation and his Wagner and Nietzsche propaganda. Understanding Germany is his profession. He was one of the first to stretch out a friendly hand to post-war Germany as represented by Stresemann. The fact that somebody else became her representative—a man who prefers to shake fists instead of hands—does not matter to Lichtenberger. His hand is still outstretched—a petrified gesture.

Mr. Lichtenberger "understands" as he is accustomed to understand literature: an understanding that always means a kind of positive acceptance, a kind of approval, of the subject to be understood. In the same way that he approached Goethe or Nietzsche, he deals with his new subject, the Third Reich. He restricts himself to written material, to texts; he avoids making use of the delusive and fallacious organs of sense. He utters no word about the specific role played by texts in politics, about their function to hide, to falsify, to produce "spontaneous" opinions. He makes no comparison of texts with facts; they are identical.

In his special field this attitude toward texts may be legitimate. A historian of literature is allowed to tell the story of Faust or Wilhelm Meister after Goethe without raising the question of truth. In this same manner, Lichtenberger paraphrases Rosenberg, Göbbels, Hitler. He avoids any distinction between speaking *about* Hitler and speaking *according to* Hitler. Quotation marks are seldom used. I made the experiment of reading characteristic pages to listeners unread in this field: they considered Lichtenberger as a National Socialist and as a fervent anti-Semite. It is without value to know that they are wrong and that Mr. Lichtenberger wishes to be neither. It is the effect that counts. This effect one should not underestimate, for by constantly protesting that he is French and objective and by finding many things which are "foreign" and "strange" in Germany, Mr. Lichtenberger inspires confidence. Above all in the United States, where only the anti-German France of Versailles is known.

However, it is just this talk of "strangeness" which conceals the greatest danger. It seems Mr. Lichtenberger knows no more exciting task than that of understanding "strange" phenomena. Of course the familiar ones do not need to be understood. Many things can be excused, even accepted, by this method—*e.g.*, the "strange" intolerance of the German regime, against which one should not be too intolerant.

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No wonder that the original motives of National Socialism (and I do not refer only to those emphasized by the Marxists) are omitted or altered in this book just as in the National Socialist books themselves. Michael Florinsky (in The New York Times of June 27) attributed this fact to the dilettantism which Mr. Lichtenberger manifests in the field of economics. This explanation is extremely gentle. It is more than dilettantism when one finds no more than one sentence referring to the suppression of strikes. And if Mr. Lichtenberger mentions the destruction of the trade unions in a chapter entitled "Spartanism," he buries one of the most important guarantees of liberty under a classical flag.

Nevertheless the volume has its value: it contains (from page 300 to page 373) an appendix that helps balance the deficiencies of the essay. The editor, Mr. Pinson, excellently selected fourteen famous Nazi documents, the most important being the "Thesis of German Religion," by Professor Bergmann, not generally read by Americans, although everybody knows about it from hearsay. This thesis is of the highest interest in so far as it continues the secularization of religious ideas which had been inaugurated by the bourgeois revolution and the labor movement—the worst enemies of National Socialism. Though God is not abolished by Mr. Bergmann, he is made to depend on earthly qualities, he is nationalized. (See the analogous deification of the nation in Hitler's book.) In any case, the Christian duality of the world and transcendental God are nullified; both spheres are intermingled. Whoever knows the history of dogmas will admit that this abolition of dualism represents one of the most violent attacks the Christian religion has ever had to face. And whoever wants to understand the actual struggle of the churches in Germany must know this document.

Since the details of the administrative system of fascist states are no better known to the Left camp than are the details of Soviet administration to the Right, E. B. Ashton's book with its suggestion—Know your enemies—is a much needed one. It is clear and complete in its exposition of fascist administration, though gradually the writer's stand on the question becomes troublesomely vague: it seems that he became infected by the very object of his attack. He assumes he is only "describing," but description can easily amount to the omission of economic and ideological explanations, in short, to unintentional falsification. This applies particularly to the subject of fascism, for fascism likes to exhibit itself in order not to explain itself. A surface description of it, therefore, is more inadequate than a surface description of any other subject. An analysis of economic and historic origins is indispensable, the more as fascism cuts its own historical roots, sets itself up as the basic national form, free from all historical and economic causation, existing by the Grace of Nature, and until today hindered in its growth by history rather than caused by it. Mr. Ashton should have revealed the secret of the parents who are so anxious not to inform their fascist child of its origin.

For him the difference between fascist and non-fascist peoples amounts to an ethnological one: he takes the Germans for a people collective by nature, opposed and incomprehensible to the Western man, equipped with a strange vocabulary, but one that is appropriate to them. Thus the distinction between collective men and individual men—in itself an inadequate distinction—becomes merely a matter of natural science for Frazer or Lévy-Bruhl. The author in no way suspects the high importance of the question: When, for what purpose, by whom and for whom, are biological terms employed in the field of economics? The fact that terms can have a pragmatic rather than a descriptive function, that they are not only individual lies but a whole ideological set-up, is unknown to him. It goes without saying that he is obliged to suppress the whole great tradition of liberalism, of Kant, of Lessing and the anti-authoritarian labor movement as being "un-German." Certain of Hitler's financial backing from foreign sources seem to me to be much less German than the contributions of Lessing or Kant.

When he turns away from the fascist man to world problems the author regains his former level. His exposition of the world as changed by the existence of the fascist states, of the semi-fascization that the democratic states are bound to develop in order to protect themselves against the complete infection—this would certainly be blacklisted in Germany and Italy.

GUENTHER S. ANDERS.

The Figure of DeQuincey

Thomas DeQuincey: His Life and Work, by Edward Sackville West. New Haven: Yale University Press. 290 pages. $4.

IT IS barely possible that certain old Edinburgh attics and cellars may still hide a bushel or so of DeQuincey's numerous manuscripts, for it is said that six sets of lodgings, "snowed up" with his papers, were found after his death. But these would probably add nothing to our present knowledge. Professor Eaton's recent full-length biography has told the whole story. Mr. Edward Sackville West's new book, "Thomas DeQuincey: His Life and Work," while adding no facts, is an entertaining study of the Opium Eater's personality and writings. Mr. West has made an important contribution to the swelling stream of DeQuincey literature by his method of dealing with well known material. He is not the historian of a life but the literary psychologist bent on discovering and analyzing motives and their flowering into action. He is particularly happy in dramatizing DeQuincey's career into a rising and falling movement to ultimate crisis and solution, a tragi-comedy with *finale lento sostenuto*. Several relationships in DeQuincey's life, glossed over by early biographers, have received adequate treatment. One of these is the temperamental incompatibility between DeQuincey and his mother. Another is the Wordsworth estrangement, caused in part by the little dreamer's unequal and belated marriage with Margaret Simpson, the dalesman's daughter. And Mr. West is almost lyrical in his estimate of the beauty, character and devotion of DeQuincey's wife, a woman "whose solid peasant virtues are curiously combined with a wistful and pathetic charm."

In spite of his happy family life and his social gifts, DeQuincey was a terribly lonely man. He touched many of the celebrities of his day—Coleridge, Wordsworth, Lamb, Hazlitt, Wilson—but he had no intimates. There was no "DeQuincey circle." A flitting, wraithlike creature, Christian by inheritance and in theory, he was, like the men of the Renaissance, pagan in thought: "he had seen the face of Apollo and, try as he might, could not forget it." By the mightiest social upheaval of the eighteenth century, the French Revolution, he seems to have been untouched. He hated the French and all their works, though ancestrally he was kin to them. An individualist, he roamed at his own sweet will physically and mentally. He was a scholar and an artist, but what artist was ever more careless of form? He was a conservative, but was there ever a conservative more indifferent to convention? When he wrote, he thought of an individual listener rather than of a group,

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and much that he wrote reads like a monologue or an apostrophe. As Mr. West acutely remarks, "DeQuincey's is the voice that whispers to us in the strictness of privacy, as it were our own mind talking to itself." He rambled along and seldom achieved completeness. It was said of Coleridge that he moved corkscrew fashion in the garden walk, never quite certain which side he preferred. Before reaching a given objective, DeQuincey generally fetched a wide, unpredictable circuit. He followed no well trodden paths in his cadenced excursions among ideas. But the cleverness, radiance, and essential humanity of his luminous thinking assure its permanence. He confides to us "the desperate beauty of irrecoverable moments." It is the "sense of poetry" in DeQuincey that makes him live.

JOHN CALVIN METCALF.

One for the Reader

Sugar in the Air, by E. C. Large. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

THERE is a certain kind of novel that is, above everything else, *interesting,* its level of reading excitement high all through. It may also be a good novel, even worthy, but its main fascination is in its original material, things one never knew till now. "Sugar in the Air" is a book like that, not one of the thin fantastics by any means, but life in odd corners and operations on a large scale—true to life and scale as well, I should say, because while organic chemists and writers on the Habits of Finance Capital might be able to blast it with errors, for the boob reader it has an inevitable sound logic of its own that will always be more convincing. It is about a middle-class, medium-weight ordinary sort of youngish man with a talent, Mr. Pry. There is no nonsense about him when we first find him holed up in the country, reading some and trying to write but with his savings nearly out; and there will be no nonsense as the story goes on into the mad surroundings of the job he gets and the power he gets, holds onto, increases, loses altogether. He is no hero but he gets things done.

Where the sugar comes in is through a crackpot scheme for synthesizing it that one of these vague stock companies was promoted into taking a plunge on. Mr. Pry, as an experienced engineer, is called in by the board of directors to go to work and see if anything can be salvaged. Step by step, what with infinite care and chance and a brilliant hunch or two, he actually manages to get a percentage of sugar out of the carbon dioxide and water, running the gas through in the presence of a blue catalyst, at a certain temperature and under the trigger-action effect of green light rays. He hadn't expected it, but it was there; and from the commercial angle it was still as crazy as ever.

The company had been honeycombed with human nature all along, so that achievement was a dangerous thing and the slightest error a possible blow-out of the whole panel. Pry was drunk on the large possibilities of the work; he had his dander up and his heart on the job. He went after the board and went out on the territory, he got a plant up and publicity out, he set up a whole machinery of production and sales and rode it himself, infecting people with his capabilities and enthusiasm. He married the girl and got a baby too, but quietly. Mr. Pry was quite a man, though I don't recall the author's saying so.

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through the woodwork and show the hole to the old maids on the board, and the board got out from under, bankruptcy and blooey. Pry stayed on to the end in a sort of bitter indifference. He had done it with his eyes open, for he was a shrewd hard case, but he would never have it in him to do so much again; he had proved in all the thousand decimal-place details what he must have known at the start; he had been in high places, but only because the job took him there, and now he was back again with a few pounds in the bank for a vacation.

The story has enough genuine types of people and jostle of the forces they set in motion and laws they live under to allow any meaning you might wish to give it, once you have broken the spell of its sustained interest. One moral might read: Invent a perfect mouse trap and do no more, and the world will beat a path to the door of Thomas A. Edison, or ride you out of town on it, one of the two. Or we can simply say that the experience of Mr. Pry is the experience in general of that type of person for whom our world reserves the term "romantic" (a less screwy world might have a different *word* for it, possibly). By this, of course, we mean someone so competent in his work and dedicated to it and personally decent, in short so expressive of the qualities we demand of any proper citizen, that he has no time or thought for self-advertising and thrusting and bald advancement and front, and is thus naturally put out like the garbage in the end, the pure damn fool.

OTIS FERGUSON.

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